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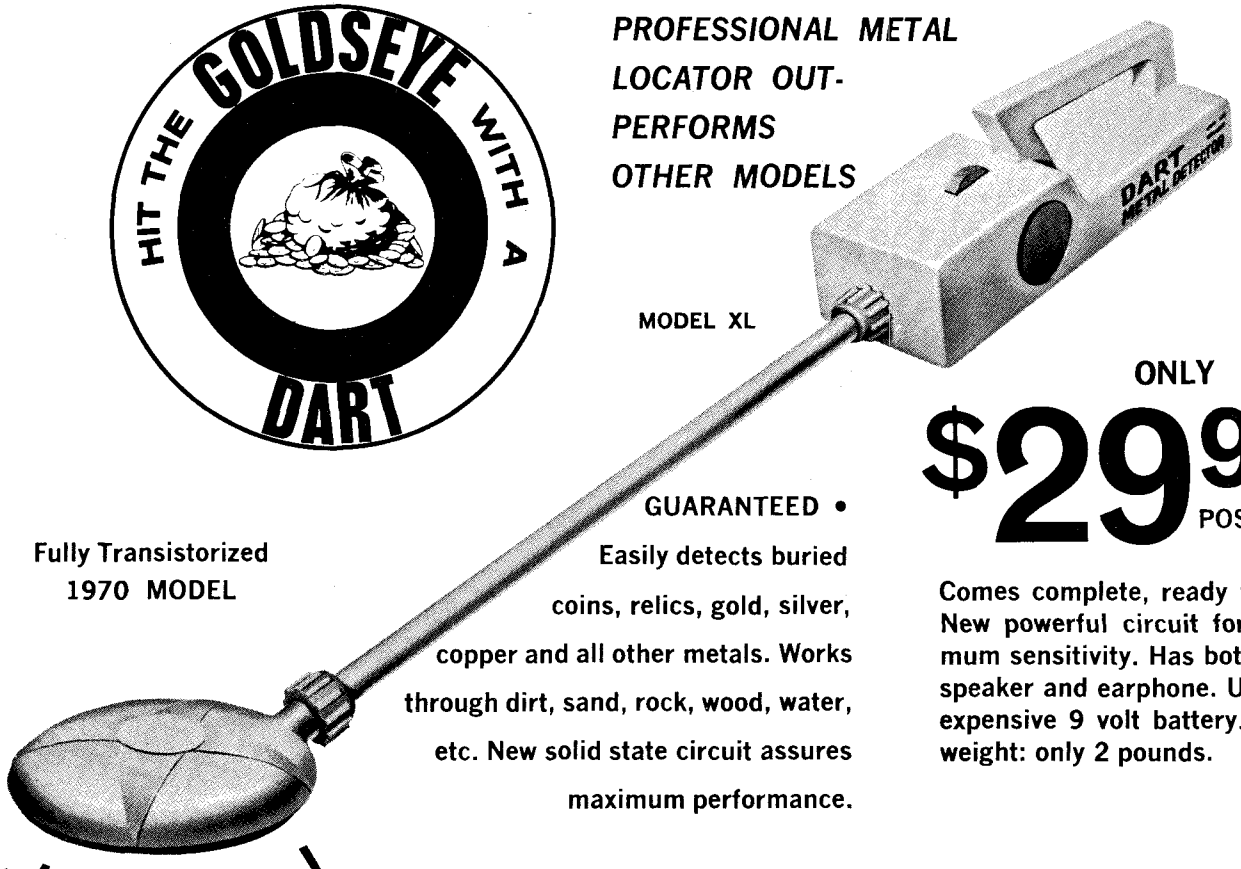

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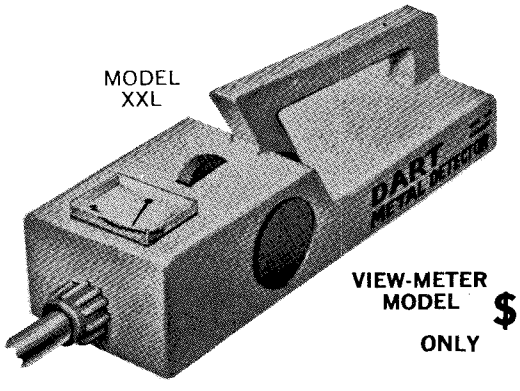

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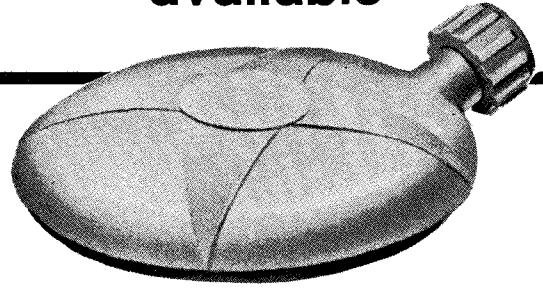

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Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write us.

Texas Ranger M. Y. Judd

My grandfather, M. Y. Judd, held the rank of private in the Texas Rangers, Frontier Company, Nueces County. His commanding officer was Warren Wallace. He enlisted June 29, 1874. I am looking for or would like to hear from the kin of someone who was in the Texas Rangers. If anyone has any information or knows of anyone who would know of this particular company of Rangers or about any outstanding deeds this company performed, please write.—Mrs. L. D. Catron, 401 Front Street, Caldwell, Texas 77836

General Rochester Gillette

My uncle, General Rochester Gillette, was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1868. He was not a general—his father named him. At eighteen years of age he left home. When he was heard from he was entering the Black Hills. He asked his parents not to write to him until they heard from him again, but they never heard from him. It was said that there was an Indian uprising around the time in the Black Hills. His parents were Wesley and Matilda Gillette. He had three sisters and one step-sister. My mother, Minnie Mittwood Gillette, married George Henry Thompson of Prattsville, Michigan. Lillie Gillette married John O'Mealey of Pettisville, Ohio. Della Gillette might have been married. Hattie Tabor Minnerley married Joe Minnerly. Later he told his wife that his name was Pocock instead of Minnerley. They had one son, Albert Minnerley. I had a sister, Georgiana Thompson, who married William Bentz of Detroit, Michigan. I married August Schmidt of Detroit. My husband died. I remarried. I married Albert Miller of Saginaw, Michigan. I would appreciate any information on G. R. Gillette.—Mrs. Allie L. Miller, 109 S. Warren, Saginaw, Michigan 48607

Walters B. Hamilton

Sometime in the early 1890s Walters B. Hamilton went to Cripple Creek, Colorado, prospecting. He later sold his interest in a mine and purchased a livery stable in Florissant, Colorado. Does anyone know where he died and is buried? I would appreciate hearing from anyone who can give me any further information on my great-grandfather Hamilton. —Mrs. Dora Bradbury, 1306 S. Washington, Ellis, Kansas 67637

Carl Otto Dittner

I am trying to locate relatives of my father, Carl Otto Dittner. My grandfather, Heinrich (Henry) Dittner was born in Aukernrarh, Germany, the youngest of sixteen children, twelve girls and four boys. The four brothers all came to America. Two settled in Canada and one, Johann (John), settled in Pennsylvania. My grandfather married Louisa Augusta Kuhrt in Germany. They came to America in 1882. They had four sons, Otto, Emil, Rudolph and Henry. Practically nothing is known of Heinrich's family after he left Germany. I would like to hear from anyone who has the name of Dittner and could be a relative.—Mrs. Clara Dittner Huffman, 1420 Skyline Drive, Manhattan, Kansas 66502

Angeline Helsel Brown

I am trying to trace my grandmother, Angeline Brown. Her maiden name was Helsel and she was married to Jonathan Hand, later to a Mr. Tremaines and later to a Mr. Brown. She lived in Ohio and Indiana most of her life and died about 1908 or 1910. Her youngest son may still be living. His name was William Brown and he visited his half-brother in Sturgis, Michigan in 1918. If anyone knows of him or knows anything about Angeline, please contact me.—Mrs. A. Armstrong, Rural Route 2, Stanwood, Michigan 49346

W. T. S. Keeney

I would like information (especially dates) concerning my uncle, William Thomas Sales Keeney, who was born in Bedford City, Virginia on March 2, 1856 and who settled in Texas around 1889 or 1890. His wife was Kate Duncan, also of Virginia. They migrated to Pecos, Texas where their first child, Mabel Vaughan Keeney was born in 1891. They later moved to Odessa, Texas where two boys were born. One boy (name unknown) died of flu in a West Virginia camp in WWI. Another, William W. (Jack) settled in Elgin, Illinois. Mabel taught school for many years and died Feb. 27, 1962 at El Paso. She was taken back to the family plot in Odessa for burial.

I do not have dates for the other family members, but I was told many years ago that they are buried in Odessa. If any of your readers in Pecos or Odessa could furnish information on this family, especially dates from graves, old newspapers, etc., I would be most grateful. I would also like to exchange information with any Keeneys doing research, since I am a direct descendant of David Keeney who settled in the wilderness of western Virginia (now West Virginia) in 1756, and for whom Keeney's Mountain in Summers County is named.—Georgia C. Keeney, 4231 S. 35th Street, Apt. B-2, Arlington, Virginia 22206

Lee and Foster Families

I would like any information on the Lee and Foster families who lived between and around Vicksburg and Jackson, Mississippi at the beginning of the Civil War. My great grandfather, W. R. or Will Lee, was married to Maryanne Foster. He was seriously wounded in the Battle of Lookout Mountain and discharged as an invalid. They moved to Sugartown, Louisiana, where he died and was buried. They had three children: Will, Amos, and Martha.—Hayes Lee, 8610 Rockhill, Houston, Texas 77017

Palmer and Napier

For many years my father, James Napier, has wondered what became of his mother. He was only six or seven years old in 1907 when she left him. His father's name was Zachery Tillen Napier, his mother's Elizabeth Palmer, and the place was Breathitt County, Kentucky, 1907. His mother left him with his father, who later remarried a woman by the name of Fugate and moved to Wisconsin. My father always has thought that some of the facts have been held back about his mother. Now his dad has been dead for over ten years and my father, who is seventy years old next year, would like to know the full facts about his mother.—Mrs. Lucille Wagner, 148 Lorie Lane, Walnut Creek, California 94596

Marion Arthur Davis' Kin

Can anyone help me to find my father's relatives? My father's name was Marion Arthur Davis. He was married to Lizzie Banks at Atlanta, Georgia in 1901. It is believed that he and my mother both grew up in Georgia. My mother changed her name to Ethel Davis. My father's brothers' names were Sam, Charlie, and Henry Davis. My father's sisters' names were Lorraine, Littie, and Ethel. If anyone can furnish any information on any of these people, I would be very grateful. —Mrs. Hazel Mitchell, 810 N. El Paso, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

Ed McDonald

I am asking for letters from friends who knew my husband, Ed McDonald. My last two children were small when he died. He was well-known over the Southwest as a cowboy and a participant in rodeos for years. He knew many famous people. There are very few TRUE WEST magazines that I receive that do not mention people our family has known. We came originally from Tularosa, New Mexico and Cochise, Arizona. Johnny Mullens, Breezy Cox, Ben Lily and so many others were friends of Ed. Our children had and adored one of the kindest fathers any child could own. It would mean so much to hear incidents of their father's life from others.—Lela McDonald, Route 2, Box 159, Cascadia, Oregon 97345

(Continued on page 69)

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January-February, 1970
Volume 17, No. 3
Whole No. 97

True West

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From the Dean Krakel Collection

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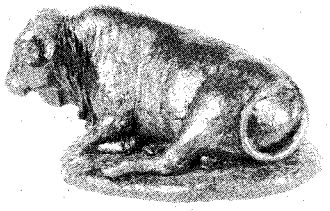

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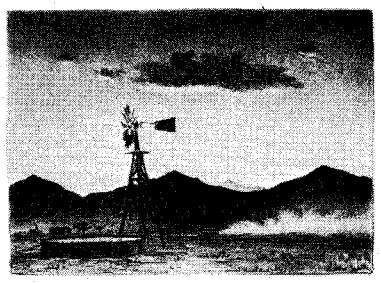

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

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UTAH MINING

Most mining camps become ghost towns when pay dirt is exhausted but Park City, Utah uniquely survived with a new recreational enterprise when its once fabulous minerals played out. Another strong addition to U. S. mining history is now available in the new well-illustrated book *Treasure Mountain Home, A Centennial History of Park City, Utah* (Deseret Book Company, $3.95) by George A. Thompson and Fraser Buck. Over one hundred years ago U. S. troops, under Col. Patrick E. Connor, discovered ore in Treasure Mountain in the Wasatch Range southeast of Salt Lake City. They erected a dead pine sapling with a bandana tied to its top as a flagstaff to mark their discovery and in so doing gave their mine the name, "Flagstaff," the one which provided the first galena ore shipped from Park City to the new railroad in Echo Canyon. The authors deal effectively with the history of Park City and its multi-million dollar bonanza, mining barons and their queens, final mineral depletion, destructive fires, extraordinary engineering feats to control flooded tunnels, the depression of the 1930s and final resurrection when mining officials underwrote a spectacular and profitable recreation unit that is now buzzing with patrons. Fashionable hotels, several ski runs, golf courses and other features provide comfort, fun and entertainment to a busy line of vacationers. Park City boasts of the only underground ski lift on mine car rails in the once abandoned Spiro Tunnel, driven years before to drain the Silver King Consolidated Mine workings.

GUNMAN'S GUN

George E. Virgines deserves high marks for his *Saga of the Colt Six-Shooter* (Frederick Fell, $7.95), an authentic account of the historic Colt pistol which made a significant contribution to the westward development of the United States. While there are various types and models of Colt firearms, this book deals primarily with the famous Colt Single Action Army Revolver, the favorite companion of many military men, peace officers, badmen and western movie actors. Within the last few years the Colt Single Action has become a popular collector's item partly because of its long and large production and partly due to the numerous models, calibers and finishes. The chapter on Distinguished Colts presents a brief description of pistols used by Bat Masterson, Frank James, Cole Younger, Billy the Kid, Emmett Dalton, John Wesley Hardin, Judge Roy Bean, Belle Starr, Buffalo Bill, Pawnee Bill, 101 Ranch, Texas Rangers, Pancho Villa, Teddy Roosevelt and General George S. Patton. There also is a chapter for fast-draw enthusiasts. The book is complete with numerous illustrations of six-shooters and those who used them, appendices on commemorative Colts, Model "P," as well as sources and references.

WALKING FOR BEEF

Four Hoofs and a Heartbeat (Pageant Press, $4.50) by Carl Swanson is the account of the unique feat of walking from the Canadian border in Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico in Texas with a hereford bull and a dog. Swanson, his trained bull, Randy, and Blondie the pooch made the arduous trip in 1964 to advertise and call attention to the plight of the farmers and ranchers. Snow, rain, mud, heat, sore feet, and hunger were overcome by human kindness along the way. Much of Swanson's philosophy is included.

A COLORADO CHARACTER

Dean of the western lady historians, Agnes Wright Spring, has either written, co-authored or edited seventeen books on inter-mountain history and her latest is *Colorado Charley, Wild Bill's Pard* (Pruett Press, $6.50). Colorado Charley Utter has had only minor notices by writers of Colorado mining history and was newsworthy as Wild Bill Hickok's sidekick who bought the burial lot where Bill was planted after Jack McCall killed him in Deadwood. Mrs. Spring literally dug up the facts about Charley's past which were buried in numerous remote hiding places. Charley, a cocky little dude in buckskin, made his mark in many ways among the rough element of his time. He worked Colorado's boom towns as miner, prospector, hunter, trapper, freighter, and also guided governors and eastern dignitaries safely over rough horseback trails which served as the primary pioneer thoroughfares. Roaming where opportunity led him, Charley was a gambler in Gunnison, Colorado and Socorro, New Mexico and hearsay put him in Panama where he allegedly served as an Indian doctor and owner of a drug store. Numerous illustrations of Colorado historic interest give emphasis where they are most effective.

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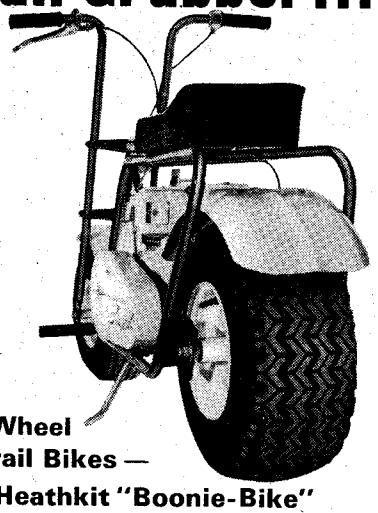

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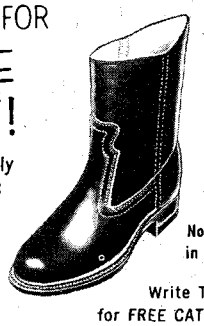

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"True to the versatility of the Appaloosa, Bonnie was ridden in gymkhanas and the Ralstins rode her on extensive hunting and fishing trips into the primitive area of Idaho. Because of her gentle nature she was used by the Ralstin children and grandchildren when learning to ride. Bonnie was buried on the Ralstin property at Spalding overlooking the Clearwater River."

A small photo of the horse accompanied the story.—Jack R. Williams, Spalding, Idaho 83551

Before the picture of them was chosen to be one of our color prints in Series I, Amy Tilden and Bonnie were our "cover girls" purtying up the October 1961 TRUE WEST!—Hosstail.

A Stumper

Dear Joe:

I have been reading OLD WEST and TRUE WEST for fifteen months. Now I will ask a small favour. I am planning some future prospecting here in Greece, and I'd like to hear from readers who are experienced in prospecting for minerals and treasure. I hope they'll give me some tips on how to go about it.—Spiros Panayioteas, P. O. Box 1440, Omonia, Athens, Greece

"Dog Catcher" Sure Was a Cowboy

Dear Sir:

I have just elbowed my way up to the newsstand and got a copy of TRUE WEST for June 1969 and read the article in "Wild Old Days" about Young Lee of Midland, Texas.

He was all man and certainly one of the best cowhands of his day. I have taken many a calf off the end of his rope, and I know what I'm talking about.

No matter what the condition of wind, weather or what-have-you, he kept doggedly on at his work and never said a word about it to anyone until the day was done. I've seen him so covered with dust you could hardly tell what he was wearing and so tired he could barely make it to the wagon to eat. He was one of the quietest, most dignified cowboys I ever knew and certainly one of the best. He was still "at it" when I left Midland for the last time in 1931.—Carl A. Osborn, Box 507, Rifle, Colorado 81650

R. E. (Gene) Farmer

Dear Sir:

I have lost a relative and all efforts to find him have failed so far. His name is R. E. (Gene) Farmer and if still alive will be in his eighties.

Since his name appeared in TRUE WEST of April 1967 in an article "The Atoka Track" by William Furno, I am wondering if any of your readers could and would write to me with information regarding him. Thank you.—Mrs. C. T. Foley, 4878 Lorraine Dr., San Diego, California 92115

Powder River Expedition

Dear Sir:

The item that I got the most out of in the April 1967 TRUE WEST was concerning the Powder River Expedition. At least the secrets are laid bare as to who and why the Indian battle was fought about ten or twelve miles from Gillette, Wyoming on land homesteaded by Jim Reynolds. I went out and built some fence for Jim, and the half section that he lives on is real nice, level land, but the Indian battle took place on his additional half section which more or less corners with it. It could be that the battle was more widespread than I know. I found numerous arrowheads as I was fencing on the flat half section. Then when it came Sunday and no work, I told Jim I was going to look over Cannon Axle Hill as it's known to many people. Jim told me how to go and where to look and I said I wouldn't be home to dinner if I found anything interesting. I found the shallow draw with the

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measly little alkali spring that Jim thought was their main camp until they couldn't stand it anymore and moved to higher ground. The spring undoubtedly had to be much stronger than when I saw it about 1927 if that bunch of men slaked their thirst, let alone watered their livestock. It looked like they had been in camp some time as there were buffalo horns and bones and it appeared that all of their sheetiron camp stoves were abandoned right there. The sheet iron was mostly rusted away except where it lapped and was riveted with brass rivets. Of course there was litter of broken glass bottles both at the spring and on the hill, and the glass was uneven in thickness. It appeared to have been hand blown. I imagine the bottles were used to carry water to the hill (which was almost a quarter mile from the spring). I am satisfied they had to have other water sources.

Cannon Axle Hill is high enough that it commands a long view in any direction. The top is bare of sagebrush and it appears that the whites cut everything possible to burn the spokes and felloes of the cannon and the wagons. The hill was littered with charred oak and square nails. But I'll tell you there was no sagebrush cut on a level with or below the half circle of their pits, numbering—as I remember—thirty-seven around the half circle and about six or eight in the opposite bank of the canyon. There was one command pit inside the circle that had undergone lots of digging, and some of it recent.

I am now convinced that I know the names of two leaders, Colonel Nelson Cole and Colonel Samuel Walker, because I can't think of them running separate. It appears to me they must have maintained their livestock but the feed had to have been scarce. Maybe there were enough men that it didn't take long to eat thirty or so buffalo.

I homesteaded a section due west of Gillette and right against the Johnson County line in 1920 in what is known as the Powder River Breaks. And you just bet no Army retreated by that route. I helped set four grave stones at one of Crazy Horse's battle grounds north of Morehead, Montana.—R. M. Jordan, R. 3, Box 44, Bloomfield, New Mexico 87413.

"Navaho Traders for Many Moons"

Dear Sir:

I want to tell you how much we enjoyed your April 1969 TRUE WEST. We were personally acquainted with many of the old-time traders and went to school with their children. Bill Richardson has a place of business here in Gallup, which may be visited easily as it is on Highway 66 passing through town. Maxine McAdams was my sister's schoolmate.

Our father was an Indian trader, too, but of a later day. He started at Coyote Canyon in 1915, yet counted many of these men as his friends before that date. Now they have an adult education class going on there besides the Head Start and other programs. The road is paved and one can whiz out to Coyote Canyon in less than an hour. When we were children it took almost all day in the buck-

(Continued on page 59)

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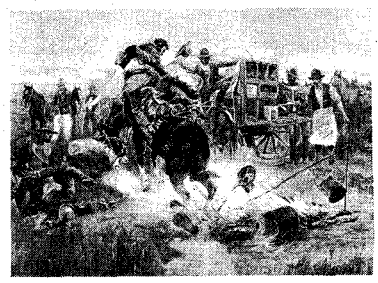

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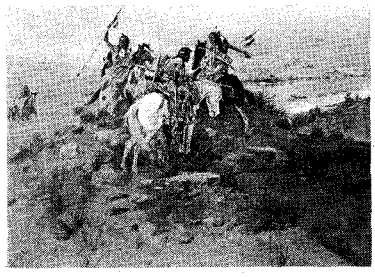

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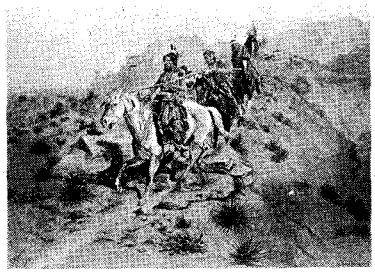

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The Fiery Daughte

Apacheria's famous scout would have done his child a favor by disowning her, for the twenty-acre meadow which was to have been hers forever caused "forever" to be a very short time . . .

By A. KINNEY GRIFFITH

Photos Courtesy Author

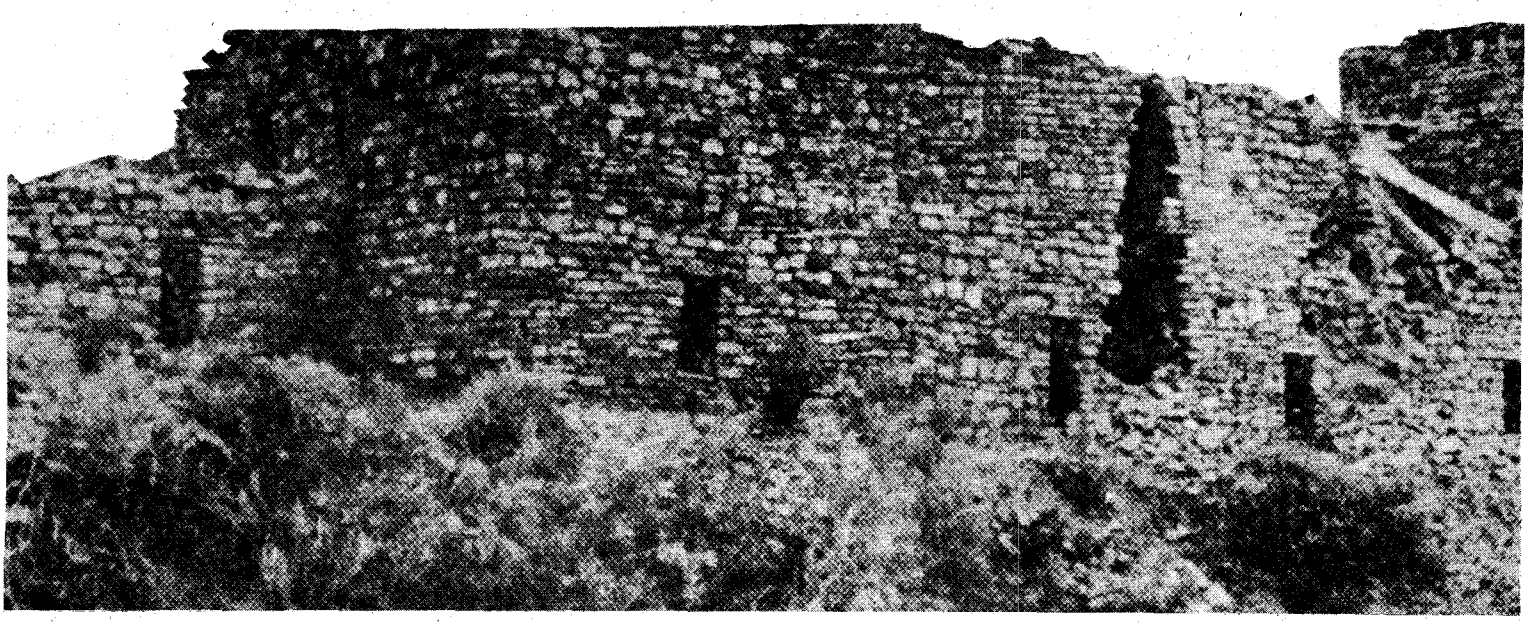
FANNY FREE was approaching a corner in her life—and when she turned it there was no one to support her, no kin, no friends. She was walking the forested trail near Arizona's Kinishba Ruins, leading to a twenty-acre meadow her father, Mickey Free, had left to her in severalty when he died on December 31, 1913.

Now, May 1, 1915, there was a hard slap on her face that came too swiftly for even her Indian-sharp eyes to catch. She had an instant of regret that she had set forth this morning without even a pocketknife as a weapon of defense; even her faithful mongrel, Shep, was gone somewhere, probably chasing a squirrel. Her attacker leaped on her, flattening her on the ground and snapping at her with animal-like growls. Fighting noiselessly as an Indian habitually does, she struck and clawed at the man and got one thumb anchored on the side of his nose while two fingers of that hand sank into his eyesocket, dislodged the eye and crushed it. A gruesome fluid ran down her wrist.

The man writhed and whined and Fanny struggled clear and leaped back. Although she had inherited her father's primitive instincts—kill or be killed—for the moment she was undecided what to do. When the man began to get up she leaped for a rock to smash his head; just then Shep, trailing her, caught up and pounced on the man and tore at his throat. Fanny now recognized her attacker: one Ramon Flores, a Mexican laborer she had seen around the Fort Apache Agency buildings. She stood there watching, and when she saw Shep was winning, she called the mongrel away, and they proceeded up the trail.

Fanny Free was born of Juana and Mickey Free on the San Carlos Reservation on July 31, 1889. Her brother Willy was born there in June 1882. Their father was a half-blood Pinal Apache and half-Mexican *criollo;* their mother Juana, a pure Pinal, had died of "the fever" in 1891. Mickey soon remarried and became the father of a girl named Josie. When he retired in 1906 after thirty-five years of service with the Apache Scouts during which time he was Apacheria's most feared manhunter, he moved his family to Fort Apache where his second wife, Ethla, or Spring Day, a Cibicu maiden of Chief Alchesay's tribe, had lived.

From there Fanny was sent to the U. S. Indian School at Phoenix, but soon became a compulsive drop-out as she could not stand the atmosphere of confinement, strict discipline, and intermix-



The Kinishba ruins at Fort Apache, Arizona, very near the twenty-acre meadow left to Fanny Free by her father.

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r of Mickey Free

ing with youngsters from a score of tribes with their conglomerate mannerisms, accents, and weird beliefs. To escape that school Willy even ran away and joined the Army. She and Willy had attended the San Carlos mission schools and they knew the difference.

Mickey tried to keep a firm parental control over his daughter and when she played hooky he would hustle her back to the classroom. But she would drop out and return to the reservation, always using the excuse that her father was sick and needed her. When she used that excuse once too often the school authorities refused to believe her. The truth was that Mickey was indeed sick, had been a life-long sufferer of tuberculosis, but he had managed to live with it, and he would chase her back to school every time.

By the time Fanny was fully grown she had reigned as White Painted Maiden, and had the reputation of being the prettiest and most vivacious Apache maiden on both reservations. A hedonist at heart, she wore the gayest of clothes, smoked cigarettes, joined the ceremonial capers of her people and always responded to the amorous jousts with the tulepa-heated passions of her male friends. But although she possessed the

Fanny in 1920.

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eternal wiles of Eve, she observed the Apache chastity codes and this was a credit to her upbringing. To be raped by anyone, let alone a hated Mexican, was far more than any self-respecting woman could stand, especially one as independent and sophisticated as Fanny Free.

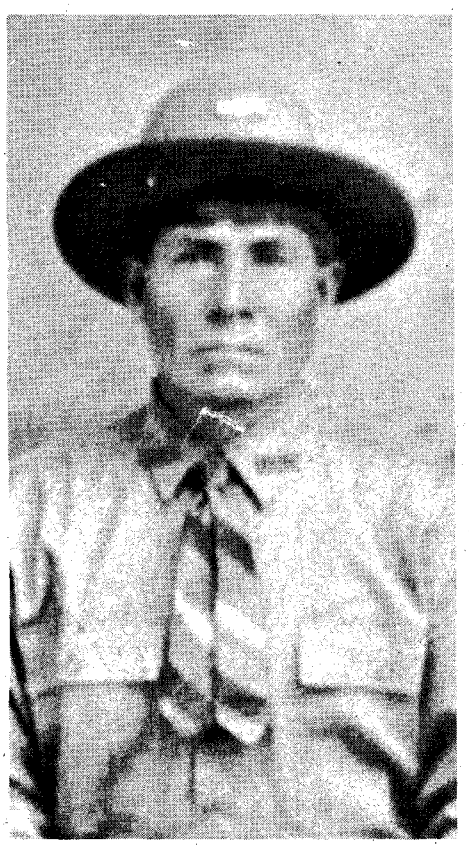
NOW, on this Saturday spring morning of 1915, she continued on to her mountain meadow between Sawtooth Tank and ancient Kinishba which, the legend said, was part of the Spirit World. Nearly a year passed since she had last been there. She was surprised to see a fair-sized log cabin standing in one corner with a two-strand barbed wire fence enclosing the acreage. An irrigation ditch ran along the west fence and the whole field had been plowed and harrowed and freshly seeded to alfalfa. Beyond the cabin was a ramada and a brush corral with two horses in it, along with a milk cow and a scrawny calf. As she approached the cabin an old man emerged, stared at her and demanded: *"Que busca usted?"*

Being trilingual like her brother and their late father, she snapped back in Mexican: "This is my land. I did not give you permission to live on it. Get off! Be gone by sundown!"

The elderly Mexican, looking alarmed, countered: "I will tell Ramon. He is my son. He has gone to the Agency to get supplies."

"He will not be back," Fanny replied. "I left him flat on his face back in the pines. Take what is left of him and go!"

The following morning she again visited her meadow. The cabin was empty, so was the corral; she gathered up armloads of dry brush, leaves, pine cones, made piles on the windward side of the cabin and struck matches to the tinder. She watched as the cabin burned to the ground. Then she returned to her neat home in Canyon Day, near the reservation grade school where she was a seasonal teacher. Her troubles were over, or so she thought.



Willy Free, who helped his sister fight for her land.

But Ramon Flores had not died on the trail. After several hours he had recovered enough to stagger back to the cabin. There he and his father packed up and moved out, and four days later saw them drive their wagon into Globe, about sixty miles southwest of the Fort Apache headquarters. Doctor Rod Kennedy treated Ramon, then the Flores went to the Gila County courthouse and told Sheriff Shanley about their trouble with Fanny Free. He told them he could do nothing without a warrant, and even so he could not serve it on a U. S. Reservation. He advised them to get a lawyer.

The first law office they came to was that of Judge John Wentworth. The judge was not in, but his understudy was. The Mexicans did not know this would-be lawyer was ex-soldier Willy Free, brother of Fanny, whom they were accusing. Willy stoically heard out their complaint, realizing it was a pack of lies; they naively took it for granted that he was a lawyer and was therefore on their side. He asked some questions, advised them what their next step should be—OUT—and booted them tumbling down the stairs. They were lucky that they survived. Willy, too, thought he was rid of them and the next day he made a fast ride up to Fort Apache to see his sister and make plans for the future.

A MONTH later Fanny Free had a caller by the name of Pedro Valesquez. As a small boy his migrating parents had brought him to America where they got employment as laborers in construction work at Fort Apache. Being an aggresive type, he became a top student in the Agency school. He adopted the Americanized name of Preston Simms, and was now leader of the Mexican Settlement on the reservation enjoying all the privileges accorded to the native Indians. He was part Negro, part Mexican, part Indian, and swaggered around in well-made clothes, a suave type who easily attracted women, but when he mentioned his business this day, Fanny turned away from him with loathing.

"Get out of here, you stinking *gusano . . zambo . . golinka!*"

"You get out!" he snapped back. "That meadow of twenty acres is mine, allotted to me by the Army. And the Flores father and son you scared off it were my employes. They were doing rightful work as requested by me, the rightful owner, and had cultivated and planted it to alfalfa at my orders."

"I inherited that land from my father, in perpetuity! Ask Mr. Peterson, the superintendent! Now get out or I will kill you!"

Simms left and the next time Fanny heard from him was a few days later when a well-liked member of the Agency Police called on her and gave her a message to appear in person at the office

Fanny Free at age 11, in 1900.

of the superintendent the next morning. She was there early and ready for battle. But Fanny being Fanny, and an Indian at that, had brought not one iota of evidence beyond her word that she was the rightful owner of the controversial twenty acres.

William M. Peterson was in a dilemma. This young woman's father had been his good friend; some years before in return for a favor, Peterson had promised Mickey Free he would look after Fanny in the event she got into trouble and Mickey was no longer alive to help her. Peterson knew there were official records at Fort Apache and in the BIA, and in the Department of Interior in Washington, that clearly stated the twenty acres had been allotted to Indian Scout Mickey Free in 1894 in perpetuity—but the perpetuity vesture could be a legal trap, it could be interpreted by officialdom as meaning the life of the allottee and/or his descendants, or just another fancy word to haggle over; to the Indian's mind it meant not only for life of the allottee but for the life of his descendants. *Perpetuitas* meant forever, as far as Fanny Free was concerned.

She made little headway by herself that day toward getting an official decision, as Simms was present with a lawyer who shouted "objection" to every word she said. The following day was a Saturday and the following Monday morning Fanny was there, supported by brother Willy and a score of relatives and in-laws of her clan. Half the Mexican settlement was on hand too, and the conference soon flared up into shrill bickering—which turned into a marathon affair of no-decisions and continued off

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and on all summer during which the first crop of alfalfa was harvested—by Preston Simms.

Somehow he got away with it, although around the meadow there had been skirmishes between the two factions, fist and club fights, horses stampeded, cattle turned loose or stolen, harness and farm equipment damaged, two wagon-loads of hay burned, the new cabin burned. And despite the efforts of the Agency Police, one Free clansman had his horse shot out from under him, and one Mexican man died in the Agency hospital after a knifing.

THE FOLLOWING year the disputed land lay fallow. Many letters and reports passed between Fort Apache and Washington but nothing definite was decided. America entered World War I and somehow this made a difference, possibly because the denizens of the Mexican settlement kept more to themselves; they became increasingly unpopular as it became known that Mexico was on the side of Germany. And the Apaches, well cognizant of the fact that they were THE NATIVE AMERICANS, were not at all adverse to making life miserable for all enemies, or suspected enemies, as had their forefathers ever since the invasion of Coronado.

When the meeting finally resumed, the headquarters building was jammed with excited Indians and screaming Mexicans. Their caterwauling and abrasive noise stymied the Agency officials headed by either Mr. Peterson or Mr. Davis as civilian moderator, and Captain Raymond Blatt for the Army.

The whole problem stemmed from the days following the Geronimo wars. New severalty re-allocation rules had been put into effect in the 1887-1889 period. Civilian and military officials parcelled out land to loyal Indian Scouts and prominent Chieftains—all of whom knew the best locations and had no qualms about an ordinary reservation family's being pre-empted from a choice plot, even though the family had been allotted the land for cultivation soon after the reservation was organized in 1869. By stretching the rules, most anyone became eligible, and soon scouts who had been disloyal—along with tribesmen who had been convicted of crime—put in for land and got it. Misunderstandings of technicalities on the part of the Indians, along with inept surveying and incorrect marking of boundary lines further complicated the problem.

Back in 1888 Major William Bishop had been commanding officer at Fort Apache, a man who was principally interested in backing up his two-goal handicap in polo against all comers. He frequently left administrative duties to his junior brass, Captain Roy Hazzard being one of them. Down at San Carlos Captain Francis Pierce and Lieutenant Sedgwick Rice held the same authority. It was through the military that veteran scout Mickey Free shrewdly had a number of choice plots assigned to him at both reservations. Mickey harbored an inborn belief, however, that the white man lacked integrity—and it was on this premise that he often insisted that his son Willy study and become a lawyer. Mickey took pains to make sure that all his allocations were in perpetuity, but he had failed to take into consideration whether perpetuity meant for the duration of his life or extended beyond into the time when he'd be in the Spirit World. The officials never pointed up this technicality, probably because they were not clear on the subject either, or didn't care. Nor did Mickey take into consideration the baleful fate which had dogged all the women who had come into his life.

FANNY FREE, being quite as resolute as her father, believed in keeping what was hers, and although she could not hardly be classed as a "taker," she was certainly not a loser and would not willingly give up anything she considered her own.

Willy, who had recently married Edith McIntosh, a granddaughter of old-time scout Archie McIntosh, had become so engaged in his own affairs at San Carlos that he seldom was on hand to help out his sister; and Fanny not only needed him and his shoot-from-the-hip advice, but she sometimes felt so tired that she had to take time out to rest.

Doctor John H. Lacy, a contract physician, told her she was suffering with tuberculosis, the same malady which had taken away her father and her mother. He recommended the U. S. Indian Hospital in Phoenix, and explained that modern medicine was able to take care of the disease—and it probably would have, had Fanny made herself do what the doctor ordered. All that was needed to distract her, however, was a mention of the name Simms, or a summons to appear again at headquarters. Mr. Peterson stood by her staunchly even though his official status had been changed and he was forced at times to by-pass the brass to get things done for her. At other times, he just did nothing—thereby unintentionally hampering Fanny. Finally he left Fort Apache in 1918.

Altogether Mickey had acquired 21 plots of land ranging in size from 5 to 160 acres. His favorite was the five-acre

(Continued on page 56)

Chief Alchesay, center, in 1920.

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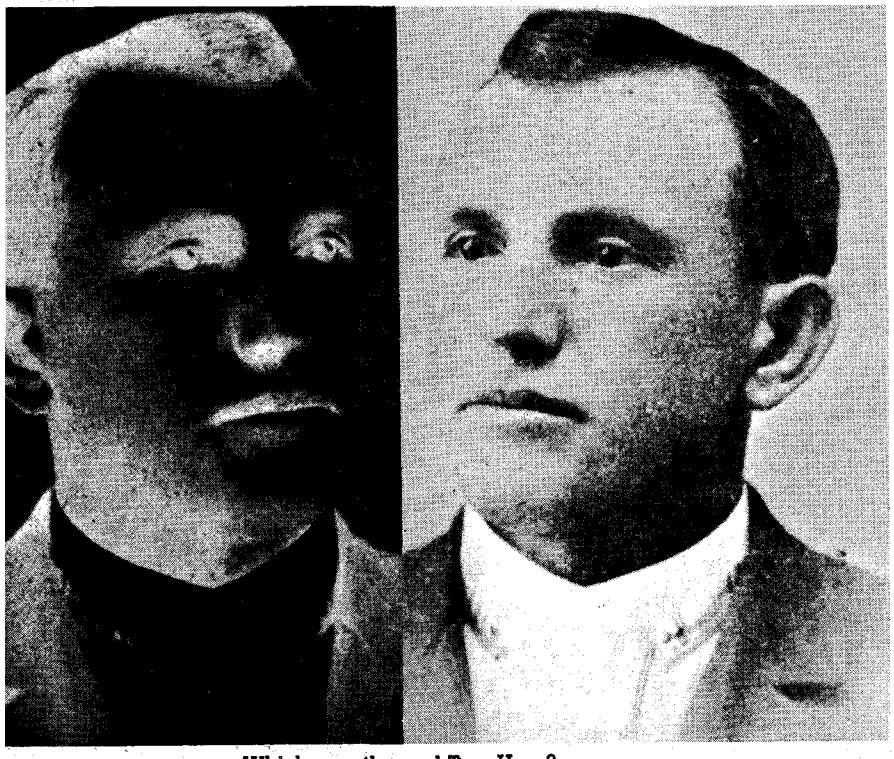
Was Tom Horn Two Men?

By DEAN KRAKEL
Photos Courtesy Author

"I look at killing as a business proposition and seem to have a corner on the market." Were these words the show-off remark of a good man in his cups, or the revealing remark of a bad man bored with his role of respectability?



Which was the real Tom Horn?

TOM HORN of Bosler, Wyoming, will forever remain a mystery to me. I tried to piece together the riddle of his last years more than a decade ago. At that time I had the help of some wonderful old gentlemen—Judge T. Blake Kennedy, rancher Andrew Ross, chief of police and Frontier Days promoter T. Joe Cahill, Governor Fenimore Chatterton, attorney Clyde Watts, newspapermen John Charles Thompson and Oscar J. Lamn, author William MacLeod Raine, Dr. George P. Johnston—"Tom Horn men," I called them. Mr. Ross, Governor Chatterton, and writer Raine were living in Colorado; the rest were residents of Cheyenne. In some way each was connected with Tom Horn and his last days on earth. Now they are all gone. There were several other contemporaries of Horn that I also talked with back in the early fifties; regrettably most of them, too, have died.

Since my years in Wyoming I have accumulated a file drawer filled with Tom Horn literature and a few more books about him. I am still spooked from my venture into his life called *The Saga of Tom Horn: The Story of a Cattlemen's War*, even though I took no side. I pulled together factual documentary

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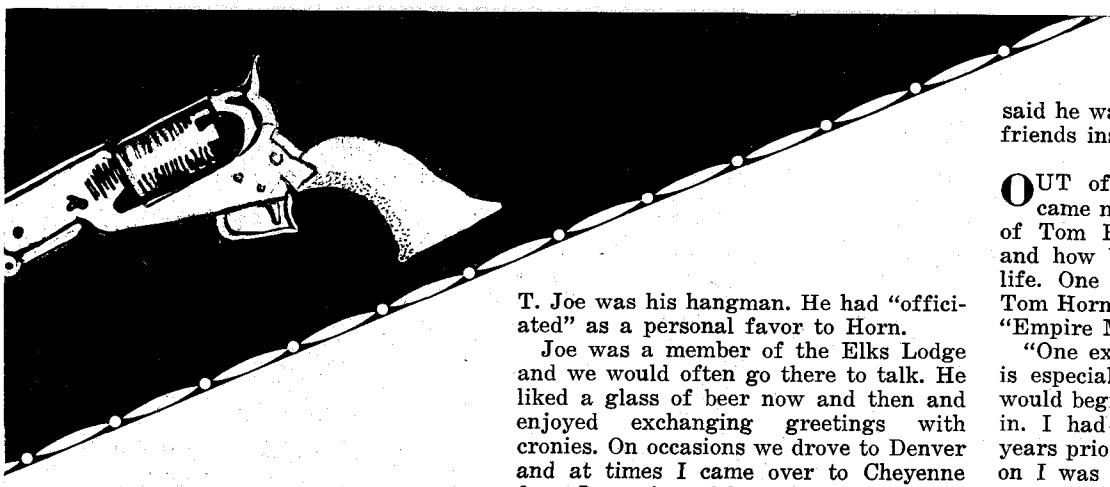

and newspaper source material on the case, and arranged it in chronological order. This was basically my book. It brought me dozens of letters about the case; some of them are quite revealing.

I have tried the case in my mind. I have sat on the judge's bench and in the jury box; I have prosecuted and defended. The point of it all was—"Did or didn't Tom Horn slay fourteen-year-old Willie Nickell on the morning of July 18, 1901, approximately one mile west of the Nickell Ranch in Iron Mountain District, some forty miles north of Cheyenne?"

One memorable point about the study in my looking and talking about Tom Horn occurred in Cheyenne during the fall of 1952 when I met Mr. W. A. James, clerk of the court for Laramie County. Mr. James had been there for thirty years. I introduced myself and said that I was interested in the Tom Horn case. Could I please look at inquest reports, trial transcripts, and any related official documents? Both our lives were brightened immeasurably that day. During the next few weeks we became good friends.

When I wasn't reading inquest and trial transcripts on my days off from the University, I was listening to T. Joe Cahill. He knew Horn as well as any man living. When Tom Horn was hanged on the morning of November 20, 1903, at the Laramie County Jail in Cheyenne, T. Joe was his hangman. He had "officiated" as a personal favor to Horn.

Joe was a member of the Elks Lodge and we would often go there to talk. He liked a glass of beer now and then and enjoyed exchanging greetings with cronies. On occasions we drove to Denver and at times I came over to Cheyenne from Laramie and brought him back for get-togethers. Once I rode from Cheyenne to Thermopolis on a bus with him. Everywhere he went, he saw friends. T. Joe Cahill had the official title of "Mr. Wyoming." He would always wave his ten-gallon hat and flash a big smile, showing a mouthful of gold teeth. It is said he was the man who made a million friends instead of a million dollars.

Judge Richard H. Scott presided over the Horn case.

OUT of the time we spent together came not only what T. Joe recollected of Tom Horn, but his own philosophy and how being a hangman affected his life. One of T. Joe's first accounts of Tom Horn appeared in the *Denver Post's* "Empire Magazine."

"One experience I had with Tom that is especially pleasant to recall," T. Joe would begin, "was the day I brought him in. I had known Tom for a couple of years prior to his imprisonment. Off and on I was a special deputy sheriff then. For some reason he had taken a liking to me and I never thought of him as anything but a friend. When he came into town we would often sit in the sun, sheltered from the wind, and have pleasurable visits. Invariably he'd braid in horsehair or rawhide as he talked. He was quick to laugh and spoke in a soft, amusing Missouri manner. Even though he was only in his late thirties, he had lived a full and exciting life. During the Spanish-American War he had served in Cuba as a mule packer. Prior to that, he had been a scout for the U. S. Cavalry in a campaign against the Apaches in Arizona and New Mexico.

"Tom's background as a detective had more breadth to it than just catching cattle rustlers. He was an avid reader and he could discuss national affairs with a high degree of intelligence. Theodore Roosevelt was his political idol. I guess T.R.'s philosophy of walking soft and carrying a big stick appealed to him.

"Horn was a large man, tipping the scales around 190 and standing over six feet tall. He was lithe and muscular in body, deeply tanned and with sharp facial features, penetrating eyes and an imposing handlebar mustache. He was always careful about his appearance. Tom sat well in the saddle and rode with an easy swinging gait as if he and the horse were one. As a rodeo performer he was frequently a money winner. Calf roping was his specialty. Tom was one of the greatest rifle shots I have ever

The jury that heard the Tom Horn case and passed down the guilty verdict.

Photos this page Courtesy the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado

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seen. There was an aura about him that commanded respect.

"Horn didn't have to work very hard at being a ladies' man. They seemed to be fascinated merely by his presence. To my knowledge there was only one that he was genuinely sweet on. She was a school teacher running a grassland school north of Cheyenne. Without going into the facts of the case, I believe the schoolmarm was one of the reasons for his downfall. The other was whiskey. You couldn't ask for a nicer person than Tom when sober, but with a few slugs of the stuff under his belt he could become moody. It was brought out at the trial that during a drinking spree he was heard to have bragged, 'I look at killing as a business proposition and seem to have a corner on the market.'

"It was on the occasion of his winding up a drinking spree that I had my first experience with Tom in support of the law. He had been hitting the bottle hard and was becoming mean, undoubtedly hoping some cowboy would cross his path. The sheriff knew of our friendship and subtly asked if I would mind seeing what I could do before there was real trouble. I said, 'I'll try. I have a plan that might at least get him out in the fresh air.' The boss quipped, 'Good luck. I hope you don't get shot up.'

"I wasn't wearing a badge or a gun when I headed for Harry Hynd's place. A group of curious citizens had gathered outside the door. Some had their noses mashed against the windows, peering in. A bigger noisier crowd watched from across the street. The saloon was almost empty. Tom had flopped sideways up against the bar. It was easy to see the bartender was scared stiff. I knew he was glad to see me. As yet, Horn hadn't started an indoor shooting exhibition. I knew I would have to play my cards just right with no mincing of words or showing of a bluff. He recognized me immediately and muttered, 'T. Joe! What'n the hell you doin'? Have a drink with me.'

"'I ain't drinking, Tom,' I blurted out. My voice had become hoarse as a foghorn.

"'What'sa matter?' he grumbled. 'Job goin' to yer head? I ain't hurt nobody.'

"I said in a half-demanding tone, 'You're coming with me for some grub and sleep. You've got to get back on the job.'

"Straightening up a little, he seemed at a loss for words, then bristled, 'I ain't goin' no place until I know where my horse and rifle is.'

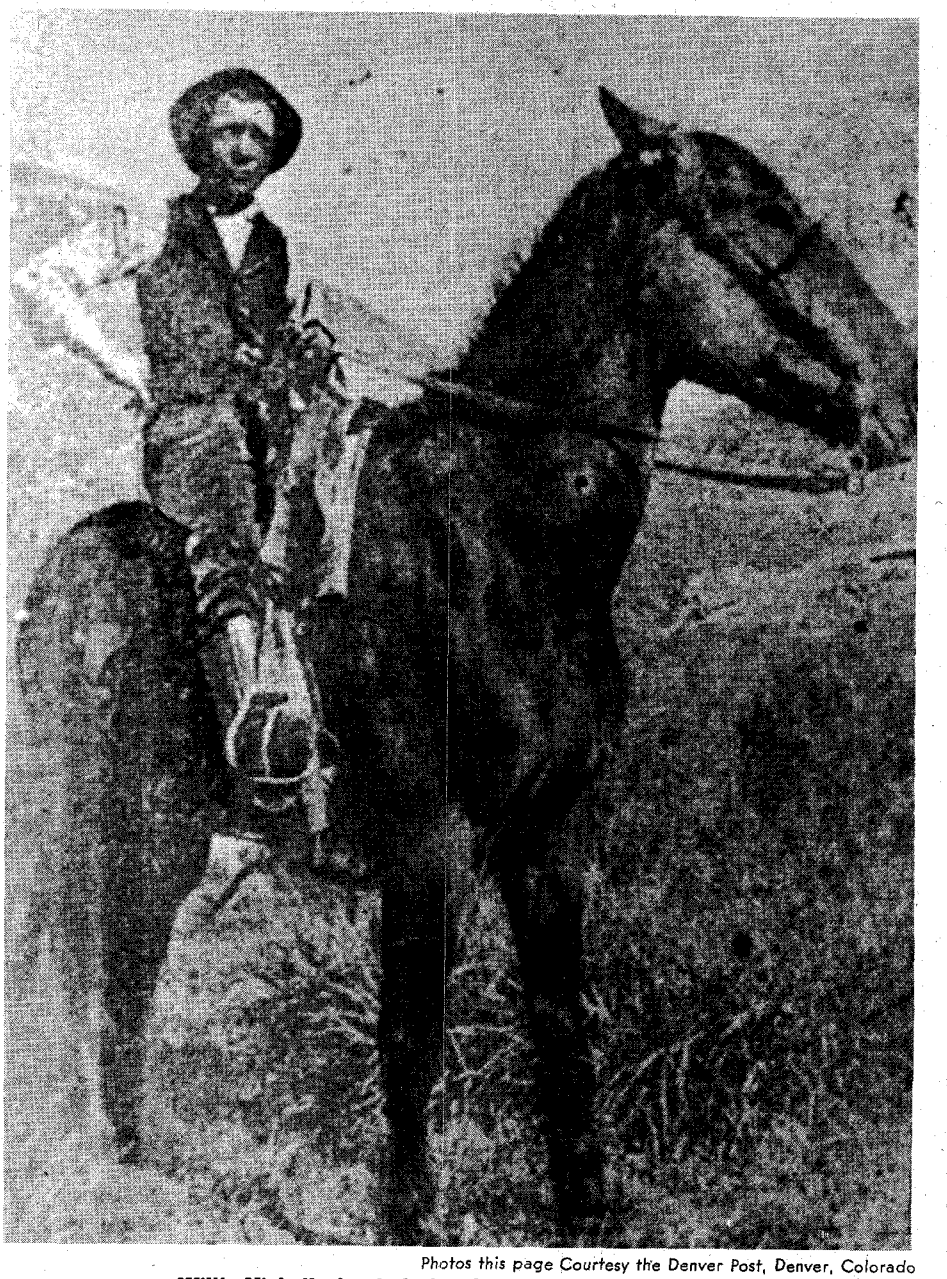
"I said, 'Don't worry about them, I'll see that they're taken care of.'

"Tom stared at me unsteadily, squinting as if trying to focus his eyes so he could study my face. His thick fingers drummed the long handle of the six-shooter hanging loosely on his hip. I'll never forget the way he looked. His face had become deadpan, eyes cold and the set of his jaw taut. Suddenly, I realized the person before me was not my friend, but the other part of a split personality. I had caught my first glimpse of Tom Horn, the killer.

"Maybe he had blacked out and didn't remember who I was. I wasn't sure what he was going to do. I wanted to shout, 'Tom! It's me, T. Joe!' Yet I knew that I had to remain calm above all.

"I couldn't help wishing I had stayed home that morning. Then Tom spoke up, 'Ya wouldn't try to spoof me, would'ja kid?' Warmth had returned to his eyes. I breathed a sigh of relief.

"'Hell, no!' I replied, somewhat weaker as I moved in close to him. Then I did something that could have been fatal. I gingerly lifted the hat off his head and walked briskly away with it.



Photos this page Courtesy the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado

Willie Nickell, shortly before his death on July 8, 1901.

Dr. George P. Johnson of Cheyenne had some important facts in Tom Horn's favor.

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I took him completely by surprise. I knew how he felt about his hat. I glanced back over my shoulder. He was rubbing the top of his head and grinning sheepishly.

"'Come on Tom—if you want this,' I smiled as I waved his Stetson.

"Someone on the outside shouted, 'Here they come!' and it seemed as if half of southern Wyoming had collected on the streets and stood gaping, silent and motionless, as we clomped along the board walks. My plan worked. Except for the irregular jangle of his spurs and a tune he was trying to hum, the notorious Tom Horn followed—meek as a lamb."

T. Joe never doubted Tom Horn's guilt. When I tried to cross him up on the subject a couple of times, I sensed he was on the verge of telling me to go to hell, so I changed the trend of conversation.

I asked him why a man like Horn would kill a fourteen-year-old boy. His reply was, "He was tried by a court of law, the verdict was guilty, and we hung him!" Joe refused to budge. The verdict had been based on evidence proven beyond a shadow of a doubt. When the motive was mentioned for Horn doing the shooting, again he was evasive.

NONE of the "Tom Horn men" I talked with would discuss at length my contention that the killing of the boy was a case of forced circumstances. Judge Kennedy said tersely, "It might be plausible." He had a strong dislike for the gunman, even though he had been on the legal team defending him.

John Clay, in his book *My Life on the Range*, characterized Horn: "Though I knew him well and had spent many days with him, I never fathomed his character. His movements were cat-like; he could crawl like a snake or stand up in a fight and take his medicine along with others. He had hunted Apaches with Miles, had run train robbers to ground; his life had been in the West, by the banks of the Rio Grande, on the deserts of Arizona, in far Montana, and now his headquarters were by the banks of the Chug and Sybille. He seemed to have an innate hatred of a house, and a road was of little use to him. Like the Boer behind his kopje, he kept under cover, shunning the divides, slipping up ravines, diving into canyons, reaching his point by tracks known only to himself. You never knew his movements, and yet he always turned up at the right moment. A strange, incomprehensible being, with sinews of steel, nerves of iron, the cunning of a fox, the pertinacity of a hound."

T. Joe Cahill, a close friend of Tom Horn.

The world that Tom Horn moved into while working first for the Two Bar Cattle Company and then for John Coble, owner of the Iron Mountain Ranch, was one of bad blood. When he signed on with Coble he was asking for trouble.

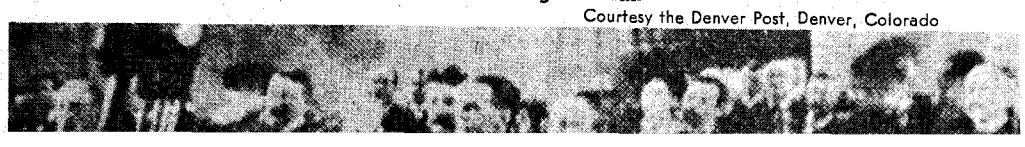
Charles B. Penrose, in his writings, gives further insight into Tom Horn's character: "Ex-Governor W. A. Richards, who died about a year ago (1913) in South America, was the Governor when our office was the Capitol Building. He was a part owner of a ranch and quite a number of cattle in Big Horn country. It finally dawned on him that cattle thieves were not respectors of persons, and that he was losing an animal occasionally. One day I met him as I was walking up to the Capitol. When we reached the building he said, 'Come into my office, I want to see you.' He immediately laid his troubles at the ranch before me, and we discussed the situation quite fully. He finally said he would like to meet Tom Horn, but hesitated to have him come to the Governor's office. I said, 'Stroll in my office at the other end of the hall at 3 o'clock this afternoon, and I will have him there.' I then made an appointment with Horn to come to my office at 2:45 p.m. At that time I told Miss Smith to go visit the young ladies in some other offices. She was gone like a shot; a house doesn't have to fall on Miss Alice before she knows it.

Joe Lefors, attached to the U.S. Marshal's office at Cheyenne, was the man who set the trap that caught Tom Horn.

"Horn was on hand promptly to the minute; the Governor a few minutes late. I opened the conversation by stating the trouble they were having in Big Horn country, and that the Governor wanted to talk to him (Horn) as to the best way of stopping the stealing there. The Governor was quite nervous, so was I—Horn perfectly cool. He talked generally, was careful of his ground; told the Governor

Courtroom scene during the trial.

Courtesy the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado



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Courtesy the University of Wyoming Archives

John Coble, owner of the Iron Mountain Ranch and one of Tom Horn's employers.

he would either drive every rustler out of the Big Horn country, or take no pay other than $350 advanced to buy two horses and pack outfit; that when he had finished the job to his (the Governor's) satisfaction he would receive $5,000, because he said in conclusion, 'Whenever everything else fails, I have a system that never does.' He placed no limit on the number of men to be gotten rid of. This almost stunned the Governor. He immediately showed an inclination to shorten the interview, and Horn, who was an intelligent fellow, understood how he felt and at once rose to his feet, and said, addressing the Governor, 'I presume that is about all you wanted to know, Sir. I shall be glad to hear from you at any time I can be of service to you.' He bid us good afternoon, and was gone. The Governor said to me, 'So that is Tom Horn! A very different man from what I expected to meet. Why, he is not bad looking, and is quite intelligent; but a cool devil, ain't he?' "

BUT to go back to that fateful date of July 18: Tom Horn was hidden in a formation of rocks near the gate that led from Kels Nickell's pasture. The Nickell ranch home was about a mile away. It was rough mountainous country. The killer knew the lay of the land. He knew by observation that Nickell would probably come up the road sometime early that morning. Checking stock in his pastures—both sheep, cows, and horses—was usually the beginning of Kels Nickell's day. Stealing, killing, and poisoning animals had been going on in the district for some time, along with fence cutting and setting grass fires.

On the morning of the 18th, an unusual set of circumstances altered events at the Nickell place. The family had gotten up earlier than usual. John Epperson, a surveyor, was at the home, as was William Mahoney. The latter was Mrs. Nickell's brother, and so two extra plates were set at breakfast. After the meal was eaten, Mr. Nickell and the two men were going to do some surveying of fence lines. His son Willie would ride to the pasture, then go on to Iron Mountain in search of a sheepherder whom Nickell wanted to employ. Willie was wearing heavy shoes, a white shirt, vest, and a hat. He was riding a bay colored horse. After trotting the horse around the barnyard, limbering him up, he was off for Iron Mountain. His mother testified at the trial that it was "about half past six or twenty minutes of seven o'clock in the morning."

What the circumstances of the next few minutes were is largely conjecture. My contention is that the killer concluded that the rider was Kels P. Nickell, and ducked out of sight waiting for him to arrive at the gate and dismount. Then

The author believes this to be a previously unpublished photo of Tom Horn.

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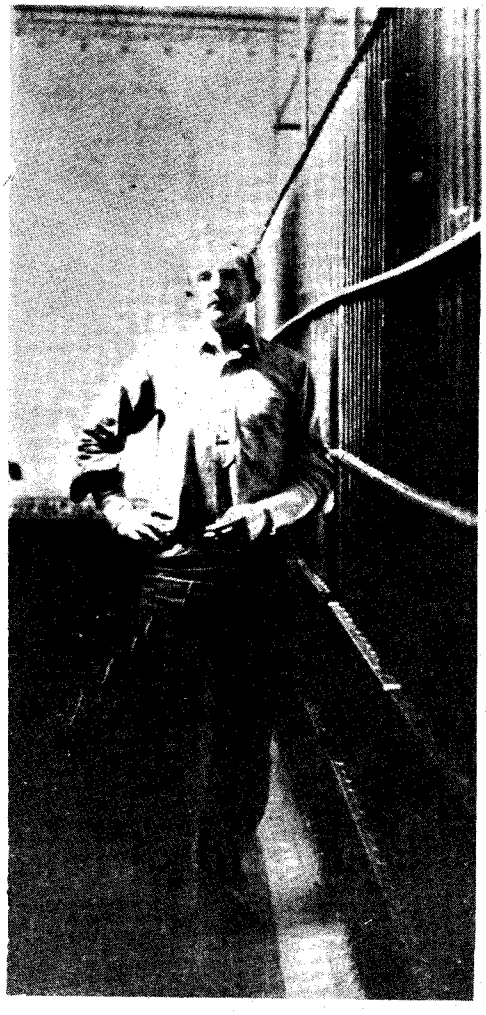
Courtesy the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado
W. R. Stoll, prosecuting attorney.



Tom Horn behind bars.

the killer raised up, took aim, intending to "blow Nickell's head off," thus settling once and for all time a long smouldering feud.

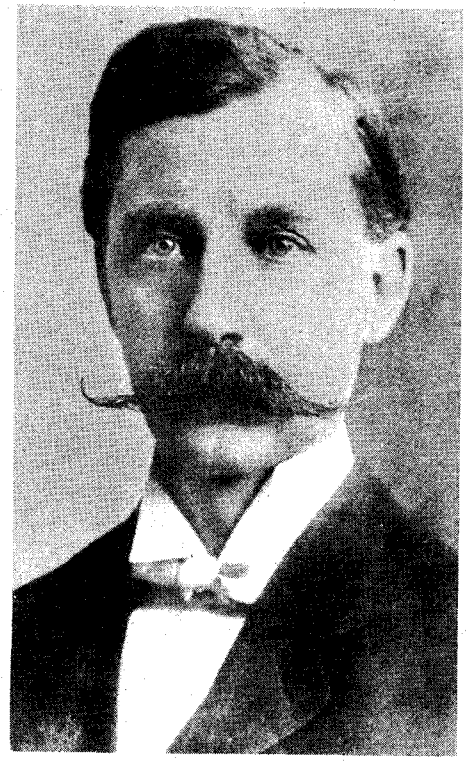
Evidence recorded at the coroner's inquest placed the boy's body from twenty to fifty feet from the gate. Willie had gotten off his horse, opened the gate and at this precise instant, caught the movement of his assassin. Undoubtedly the horse bolted. The boy then turned and began to run, perhaps too terrified to scream. The wounds ripped through Willie's rib box, according to the coroner's reports, and came out "just left of the breast bone." The two shots were fired in rapid succession as the wounds were close together. Doctors performing the post-mortem indicated that either shot would have been fatal.

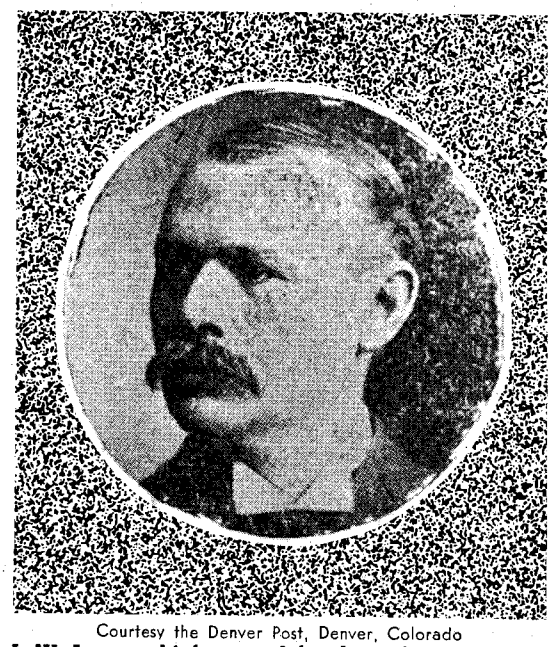
Willie's body was discovered twenty-four hours later by his brother Fred. What happened during those tragic last seconds of life? Did the assassin and the boy converse? Did they stand and stare—stunned at discovery? Or was it almost simultaneous action—a few desperate steps toward escape, and then two shots?

It was Joe Lefors who was "wily" enough to bait and set the trap which eventually caught Tom Horn. Lefors, attached to the U. S. Marshal's office, started looking and listening in and around Cheyenne. A reward was being offered. He didn't have to place his ear to the ground long until he knew from which direction the sound was coming.

Tom Horn was tight-lipped and distant with people until he started drinking. Then he became garrulous. Tom was lonesome and whiskey made him do and say crazy things. He could be friendly one moment—tense and deadly the next. Joe Lefors was a tough little man, somewhat like a character out of a Conan

Fenimore Chatterton, Governor of Wyoming during the Tom Horn case.





Courtesy the Denver Post, Denver, Colorado
J. W. Lacey, chief counsel for the defense.

Doyle mystery—stocky, short-legged, suspicious, with shifty penetrating eyes and a handlebar mustache. He was more sleuth than detective. The ruse he planned with which to hook Tom went off perfectly. The bait offered was a job chasing cow thieves up in Montana. John Coble, Horn's employer, jumped at the opportunity to get his man out of the country. Tom was just as eager.

Lefors set the stage for a meeting in the U. S. Marshal's office. The date was Sunday, January 19, 1902. Leslie Snow, Deputy Sheriff of Laramie County, and Charles Onhause, Clerk of the Court, were hidden in the next room. Mr. Onhause took down the conversation. Deputy Snow was the witness. Lefors asked questions and a talkative Tom Horn, quite out of character, reeled off the answers—time, places, and circumstances. The court stenographer strained to get it all down:

LEFORS: "Tom, they are good people [Montana employers]. I have worked for them five or six years. You will have to get right in among them, and gain their confidence, and show them you are all right."

Horn: "I don't want to be making reports to anybody at any time. I will simply have one report to make, and that will be my final report. If a man has to make reports all the time, they will catch the wisest S.O.B. on earth. These people are not afraid of shooting, are they?"

Lefors: "No, they are not afraid of shooting."

Horn: "I shoot too much, I know. You know me when it comes to shooting. I will protect the people I am working for, but I have never got my employers into any trouble yet over anything I have done. A man can't be too careful because you don't want any --- --- officers to know what you are doing."

Lefors: "Tom, I know you are a good man for the place. You are the best man to cover up your trail I ever saw. In the

(Continued on page 52)

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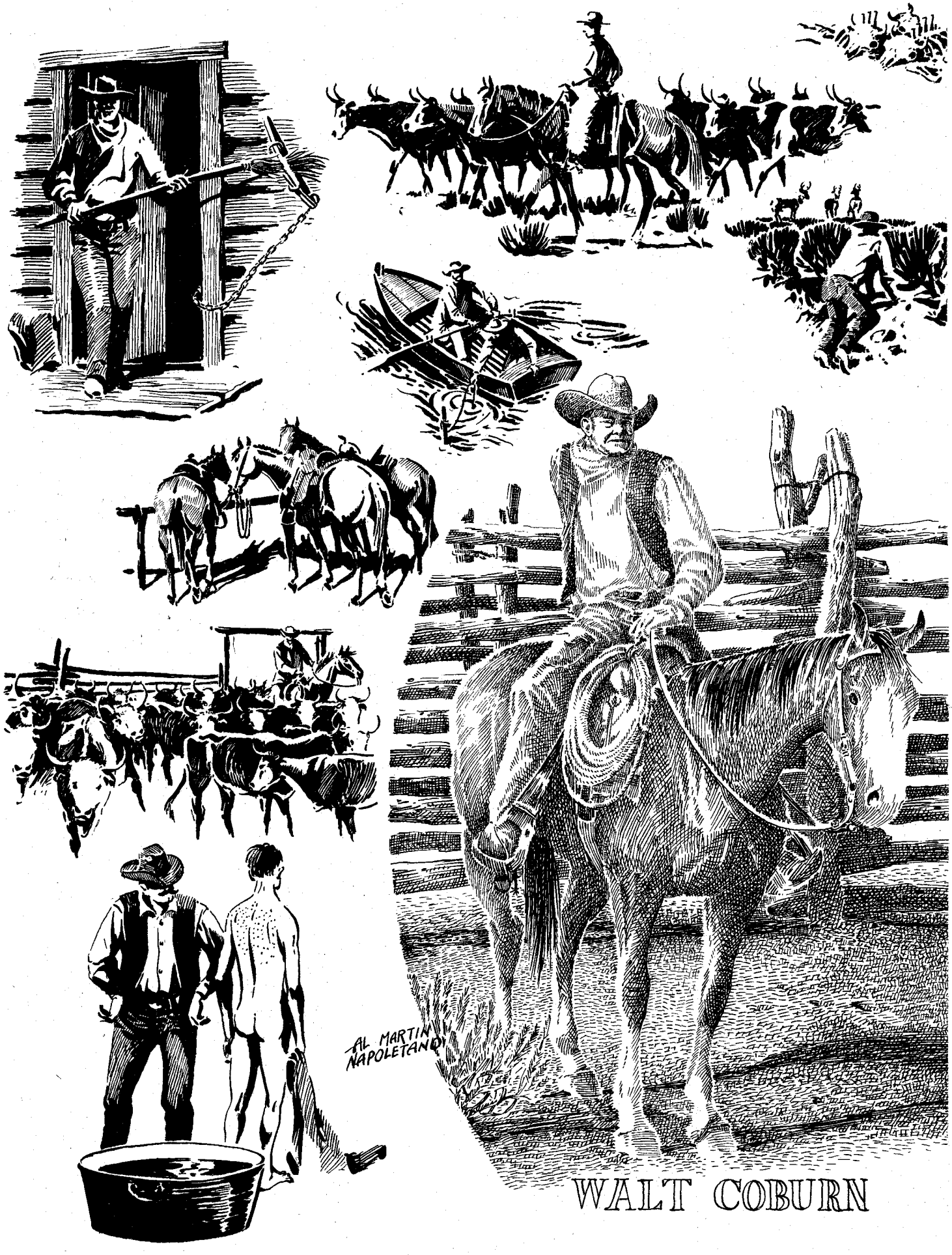

WALT COBURN

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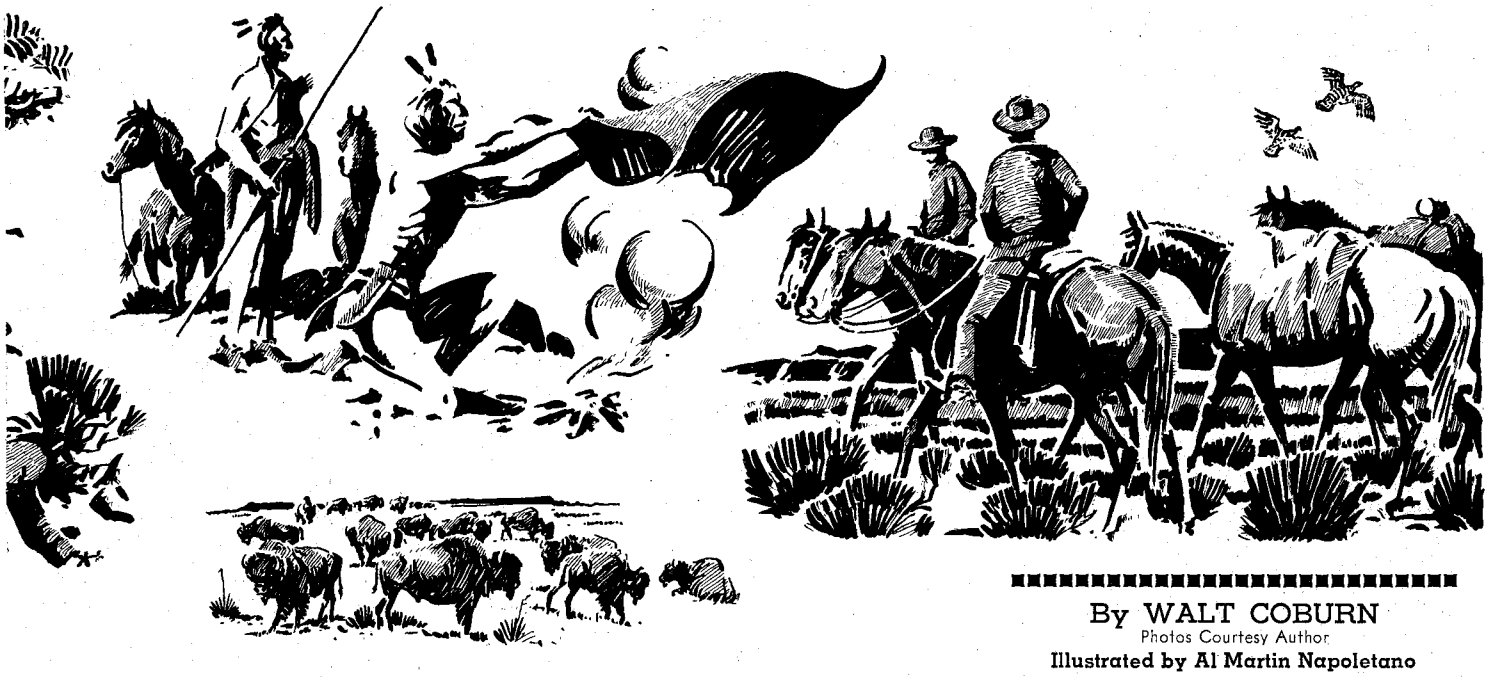

By WALT COBURN
Photos Courtesy Author
Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

A LOUSY ENDING TO A TOP-NOTCH TRAIL DRIVE

If you can imagine a pint-sized ice cube with the itch—that was Walt!

IT WAS the last two weeks in August. I was about ten years old and barely tipped the scales at seventy-five pounds with the pockets of my Levi overalls filled with rocks. So short-legged I had to use the saddle strings to climb aboard my cowpony Snowflake. But in spite of my runty size I was doing my darndest to make a hand on my father's Circle C ranch in Montana.

Usually the fall beef roundup began the last two weeks in August, and Horace Brewster, the wagon boss, had promised to take me along. School began the Tuesday following Labor Day so I had 'er made to get into Malta, the nearest railroad point from the ranch, on Sunday, board the night train for Great Falls, where I went to school, and be there early Labor Day morning. That would give me at least ten days on the roundup, riding early morning circle, helping to hold the big gatherment of cattle at the holding grounds that were fetched in by the cowpunchers on circle. Tending the branding fire, going on day herd, standing my two hours' night guard around the bedded herd.

Then came the bad news. The Northern Roundup Association had decided the fall beef roundup would start the first week in September that year. For me it was a gutshot, and I was one sorely disappointed young cowhand. It was my older half-brother Wallace who saved the day.

"I'm taking a pack outfit tomorrow morning and pulling out for Rocky Point on the Missouri, and I'm taking you along, pardner. We'll ketch us a mess of catfish, then cross the river and prowl the badlands for Bighorn sheep, or maybe we'll head for the wild plum grove where silvertip grizzly bears hang out. They like the wild plums."

The Circle C had just bought the Mayberry ranch on the Missouri and Wallace further promised, "We'll wind up the trip trailing the Mayberry cattle to the home ranch. There'll be Bill and Tom Mayberry and old man Peck to help us on the drive that will take three or four days on the trail. So pack your forty years gatherment in your warsack and help me get the pack outfit together. We'll camp tomorrow night at old Tex Alford's place at Rocky Point and have a mess of catfish for breakfast from Tex's trot line."

The rest of the day was spent selecting pack saddles and loading rawhide kyack sacks with grub. There wasn't much to pack in my canvas warsack that had once held beans. I'd worn out the summer's supply of clothing I'd fetched to the ranch in my telescope valise. I was down to my last suit of thin cotton drawers, and was plumb out of undershirts, down to my last black sateen shirt and threadbare Levi overalls. But I was too excited to care much about such two-bit trifles. The thought of spending two weeks with Wallace was something to conjure up plenty of kid dreams, because Wallace was more than a blood brother. He had always been a pardner I'd worshipped as a tin god hero afoot or ahorseback. Wallace was the only one who knew I carried a sack of Bull Durham and cigarette papers in my black sateen shirt pocket and a small slice of Climax chewing tobacco in my hip pocket. I rolled my own smokes but I usually got sick if I chewed the tobacco.

When I was alone with Wallace I felt free to cuss or sing the endless ribald verses of the Old Chisholm Trail and numerous other cowboy songs. I knew every line of the poems in Wallace's book *Rhymes From A Roundup Camp* and I'd recite them in cow camps and bunkhouses. While Wallace wrote poetry he was no sissy. He was built like a welterweight and had plenty of ring science and was hard to whip in the squared circle or a rough and tumble free-for-all, with no holds barred. For

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many years he was the champion rifle and shotgun shot in Montana, a big game hunter. Wallace was a fun loving, happy-go-lucky, good natured man, a born dreamer whose zest for living was contagious. He could tell comical anecdotes by the hour, or sing all the old trail songs, cowboy laments and Irish folk songs.

From the time I was six years old and had learned to ride Snowflake, the cow-pony he gave me, Wallace would take me along on hunting trips. He presented me with my first Winchester .22 rifle, the kind used in shooting galleries, and taught me how to handle it—how to read sign—how to conduct myself around camp and do the camp chores. He taught me the rules of behavior while hunting that governed my own safety and the safety of my hunting companions, be it duck or game bird, or big game hunting, so that I was never underfoot around camp or on the trail. Most shooting accidents on hunting trips are caused by carelessness and Wallace drilled that lesson into me since I can remember. Never keep a loaded rifle or shotgun in camp and other cardinal rules too numerous to mention here. If you wounded a deer, you followed the blood sign and tracks until you could get in the shot that killed the wounded buck. "Put out your campfire" was another rule and "never get lost." Learn to spot all landmarks. Once you traveled into an unknown place, memorize each landmark along the way so that you could go back, even years afterwards. There was no excuse, he told me, for a man getting lost. Keep your eyes and ears open, learn your country, and after a time you develop a sort of sixth sense, an animal instinct. He taught me to study the ways of all wild animals and birds and to learn where the waterholes and creeks were located—the old buffalo trails and wallows, the old freight roads, so that you could make a map with a stick on level ground of the trail you made yesterday or last year. To keep your wits whetted like you'd sharpen the blade of your jackknife. Lessons that were never to be forgotten.

WE PULLED OUT before sunrise next morning, leading two pack horses. One horse carried Wallace's round-up bed that would do for the two of us. The other horse carried grub. We followed the old freight road south to the Rocky Point Crossing on the Missouri. It was a little after sunrise when we sighted a big bunch of antelope and we dismounted at an old buffalo wallow. While our horses grazed we lay side by side on our bellies under the rim of the wallow. Wallace fastened a red flannel rag, used to clean the rifle barrels, to the ring of the metal ramrod and raised it slowly, then waved it to attract the attention of the grazing antelope. It took a long time to "flag" the curious pronghorns that cautiously circled within a close distance of perhaps a few hundred feet of where we lay. Wallace handed me the flag while he took a picture of the herd with his folding telescope Kodak. The barely audible click was enough to spook the big buck who whistled through flared nostrils, and that signal set the bunch in motion. In a split second they were off and running, leaping high over the scatterment of tall sagebrush, the white flag of the rump hair flaring. Wallace barely had time to get a second snapshot before they were beyond rifle range.

We'd spent close to an hour, sun time, but it was well worth it. It wasn't wasted by a long shot. I had learned how to flag a bunch of antelope; that it required patience and lying motionless as a dead dog. Wallace told me it might come in handy if I ever ran out of meat and had only a six-shooter—that that was how the Indians tricked the curious antelope up within bow and arrow distance.

At every waterhole and creek on the long stretch of prairie there were flocks of prairie chicken and sagehens, teal and mallard ducks. Bleached out buffalo skull and bone piles were scattered all over the prairie, buffalo that had been killed by the white hunters for their hides. There were circles of old tepee rocks, half covered by the drifting sands of time and all but hidden by buffalo grass, where large Indian camps had stood long before the coming of the white man and pony soldiers.

The sun was noon high when the rolling prairie gave way to the rough brakes of the badlands, where the high clumps of sagebrush and greasewood had been crowded out by the buck-brush and scrub pine in the deep coulees and cut canyons. The old freight road followed the bald ridges and you could see the wind-torn clay buttes and outcroppings of sandstone ledges. In the bottom of some of the canyons there were springs of crystal clear water called gyp water, short for gypsum, and bitter as quinine. The banks of black alkali were white crusted along the edges and in places covered with high swamp grass. That black bog could sink a horse and rider, and the water could give a man or beast the scours. This was mountain lion, cougar country, black and cinnamon and grizzly bear country. Trapper country. Outlaw country. A vast wilderness that stretched as far as the human eye could see. An outlaw with a bounty on his scalp could hide out in the badlands for months and years. No law officer or range detective bounty hunter ever had the damnfool temerity to venture alone into the badlands.

The renegade outlaws who made use of the badlands for refuge used the sandstone ledges and high clay buttes for lookout points, even as the Indians had once done when on the warpath. On these lookout points were black areas where

Rocky Point Crossing on the Missouri River, 1896.

Courtesy Al Lucke, Havre, Montana

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Wallace D. Coburn poses with his kill.

the war parties had made smoke signals, and it was from these vantage points that the Indians had spotted the Lewis and Clark party who used rafts and flat-bottom boats to explore the Missouri River, and in later years they had watched the river steamboats that came from St. Louis to Fort Benton, the head of navigation. In pioneer days fur trading posts were at the mouth of the Musselshell where it emptied into the wide Missouri. Fort Musselshell had long since been abandoned, but there was a ferry-boat crossing, a store and a saloon, and a freight and stagecoach road leading to Lewistown.

AT ONE TIME Rocky Point Crossing on the Missouri had been a small settlement of log cabins, a store and a saloon. A tough element of trappers, wolfers, placer miners who panned gold along the sandbars, horse thieves and cattle rustlers used the crossing to drive over stolen stock. Now Walter Fletcher had a trading post store and saloon at old Fort Musselshell. Mark Frost, another cowpuncher, had a trading post store on the south bank of the river at Rocky Point, and Old Tex Alford, who had come from Texas with numerous trail herds, had a saloon at his ranch on the north bank. Together the three men ran the flat-bottom scow ferryboat at Rocky Point. Fletcher and Frost and Old Tex wintered Circle C cattle at their ranches, feeding the hay they had put up from their rich river bottomlands during the summer months.

Wallace and me and our pack horses came down the long ridge of the old freight road to Tex Alford's place in the afterglow of a red sunset that turned the leaves of the old cottonwood trees a bright gold and the muddy waters of the Missouri into a river of fire. It was a breathtaking panoramic view, and the hushed silence that fell across the badlands was like a silent prayer of nature. The first shadows of night were tinting the edges of the deep purple sky with charcoal when we reached Tex Alford's place.

A few saddle horses stood hipshot and half asleep at the hitchrack of the sod-roofed, log cabin saloon. We unsaddled and slipped the loads from the pack horses and turned them loose to roll and graze in Tex's horse pasture. The saddled horses belonged to Gregory Doney and two of his stalwart teen-aged boys, and Antoine Gladeau who was shirt-tail kin to the Doneys. Antoine wasn't much of a worker but he was one of the best fiddlers in the country.

Gregory Doney's half-breed hay crew had been putting up hay on contract at the Rock Creek, Seven Mile, Hawley and CK ranch line camps on the Missouri that belonged to the Circle C. The haystacks were measured a couple-three weeks after stacking to give the loosely tromped hay a chance to settle, and Gregory Doney was paid by the ton after measurements. He told Wallace it was time now for the stacks to be measured so that he could pay off his hay crew. It would take a couple of days to ride to the scattered ranches, Wallace said, and he'd need a hundred-foot tape measure. So Gregory sent one of his boys across the river in the rowboat to get a tape from Mark Frost's store.

About half an hour later when young Doney showed up he had Mark Frost with him, and Frost handed Wallace a leather-cased tape measure. Mark Frost was a medium-sized husky man, with saddle-warped legs. His hair was almost silvery white, as was his drooping mustache. He lined up at the bar with Wallace, and Old Tex gave us boys a quart bottle of beer apiece, with a reminder that afterwards we were on the Injun List.

Me and the Doney kids built a bonfire on the riverbank and when the men joined us we all cut ribs and chunks of meat from a hindquarter that hung from the outside ridge log of the barn. We roasted the beef ribs and meat on old long-handled branding irons. Old Tex's remark that the beef was "Slow Elk" meant that a beef had been butchered, the brand cut out of the hide, the ears whacked off with the tell-tale earmarks, and the hide cut up and sunk deep in the muddy waters of the river. As a rule the average river rancher had his own registered brand and a few head of cattle in that iron, but it was a well known secret they never butchered their own beef. Usually the butchered beef belonged to one of the big cow outfits. For all I knew, and cared less, I was eating Circle C beef when I wolfed down the rare meat that was charred black on the outside.

The campfire we sat around was little more than a hundred feet from the empty saloon. Tex Alford had said he was short on kerosene and had lighted six candles, stuck in whiskey bottles, and had lined them up on the rough plank bar. Now we could see the flickering candlelight through the open door of the empty saloon. Wallace was sitting cross-legged as he carelessly picked up the Winchester .22 rifle and, without raising the barrel above his belt line, fired six shots in rapid succession, and one by one the

(Continued on page 45)

All packed, ready to move out.

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Ardmore City Hall. As the date on the building states, it was built in 1904, three years before Oklahoma became a state. At this time this part of the country was still Indian Territory. The City Hall housed the Police Department as well as the Fire Department, whose early equipment is proudly shown in the picture.

BUCK GARRETT

Man and Legend

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By LOUISE RIOTTE

Photos Courtesy Author

The public dishes up a rather standard bill of fare for any peace officer who's politically powerful enough, lady-killer enough, or physically brave enough to be envied. It's honey one day; sour grapes the next—and it sure builds muscle!

Sheriff Buck Garrett

SHERIFF BUCK GARRETT, blond, blue-eyed, handsome, could well have played the starring role in a drama depicting the popular idea of an early Western sheriff. Standing 6'2" tall, weighing 200 pounds, always immaculately dressed and usually astride his big, white horse he was a familiar sight in Ardmore, Oklahoma and Carter County from 1905 until 1922.

Born in 1875 near Paris, Texas, he grew up there and at an early age became a deputy U. S. marshal, working out of the Paris district. He also spent some time as a lawman in Wyoming and Montana before coming to Indian Territory.

Garrett began his rise to power in 1905 when he was elected police chief of Ardmore. Under its aldermanic form of city government, all city officials were elected, whereas today under the commission-city manager form of government, only the five commissioners are elected and all other officials are appointed.

In 1910, after five years as police chief, Garrett ran for county sheriff against J. Holmes Akers who was the first sheriff after statehood came in November, 1907. By tradition Akers, who had been a good county official, should have been due a second term as sheriff but Garrett, whose personal magnetism "could win votes and get people to do things," defeated him. As one man said, "When Buck entered a room it was like all the lights being turned on!"

From the beginning the new sheriff was surrounded by men who became almost as famous as himself—Deputies Bud Ballew, Dow Brazil and, later, Jim Carter have all become legendary characters themselves in the county where they represented the law. Of these, probably the most colorful (in more ways than one, for he had bright red hair) was Deputy Bud Ballew who was often photographed with the sheriff.

One early-day resident gave me an account of one of the problem "gangs" with which Garrett and his deputies had to deal—the Ford boys. According to him, "We had a lot of trouble in the early days with a couple of gangs, the Ford boys and the Key boys. In the Ford family there were a number of sons, seven or eight, and they were loyal to each other. If you had a fight with one Ford boy and whipped him, then you would have to fight all of them. They were not big-time operators but did a little of everything—bootlegging on a small scale and fighting and gambling."

It is said that they opened up the old coal mines around Lake Murray which were on land they owned at that time and that they were instrumental in getting the railroad brought through. But their activities in less legal occupations kept the sheriff and his deputies busy. The Fords could, and did, supply a lot of headaches.

PRIOR to statehood the Indian Territory was swept by outlawry. Train robberies occurred every new moon in what had become an asylum for fugitives from other states and a breeding place for crime. Its peculiar geography afforded hiding places where officers could be held at bay.

The criminal records of the United States district court at Fort Smith show that more than 100 men were executed during the days of Isaac Parker, the hanging judge. Judge Parker's jurisdiction included the Indian Territory and the state of Arkansas, and all of his victims died with their boots on, true to tradition and the prophecy of their fellows.

The early days of the opening of the territory had attracted horse thieves, train robbers, hijackers, bank raiders, yeggmen, ragamuffins, brand blotters, vagabonds, four flushers, mountebanks, *chevaliers d'industrie*, "con" men, camp followers, tenderfeet, butterfly chasers, remittance men, blue sky promoters, bumpkins and goofs, a lot of whom were still there in 1905 when Garrett was elected police chief of Ardmore.

And then there were the gambling dens where adventurous spirits risked everything they had on a throw of the dice or a turn of the cards. Where money and jewelry changed hands with dizzying rapidity. And tempers flared and guns were quick.

A dangerous confederation of bootleggers busied themselves in the illicit traffic of raw red liquor, and "Lo, the poor Indian" was liberally supplied with this tailor-made hell brew. This was the kind of country inherited by Garrett in which he had to keep law and order. It was going to take a lot of man to do it and he was all of that.

One of the early-day lawbreakers was Arch Campbell who was killed by Bud Ballew in Ardmore. Hearing that he was in a barber shop on East Main, Buck Garrett and Bud Ballew planned to arrest him there, each to enter by a different door, front and back, so he could not escape. Ballew entered by the front door first and the man, who was possibly drunk, became abusive and attempted to resist arrest. He started to draw his gun but Ballew was too quick for him.

Bud Ballew also killed Steve Talkington who had a gambling house in the oil fields. It was a brawling and disorderly place and Talkington resented what he felt was the interference of the sheriff and his deputy in their attempts to keep order. The two lawmen went out there one day to arrest him and he, also, was killed when he attempted to resist. To kill or be killed was the order of the day and hesitation on the part of a lawman could be very fatal.

Ballew killed seven or eight men in the line of duty. In each instance he would go immediately into District Court for the earliest possible trial, and he was always acquitted. He did this, of course, because if he were once acquitted he could not be tried a second time for the same deed, and it was settled for all time.

One of the most surprising things that I found out about Sheriff Buck Garrett was that he never killed a man during his tenure of office, either as chief of police or sheriff. In fact, I was told that he very seldom wore a gun. If he did it was a small, concealed weapon. Nevertheless, he never hesitated to enter into

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a fight or brawl to make an arrest when necessary and, as one man put it, "He just seemed to get things done without shooting. He settled things quietly, perhaps because he was completely fearless and they knew it." And he was a handy man with his fists! It has been said that during the time Garrett held office Carter County averaged a killing a day, usually in a common brawl. A few men were killed resisting arrest, but not by the sheriff. Garrett was a strong and brave man who fitted his time well but everywhere, when I talked to people who knew him well, I found another facet of his personality becoming evident.

ONE EARLY-DAY resident no longer living in Ardmore tells this story about Buck Garrett: "I vividly remember him and his deputies. I thought they were great. Of course, I was only a child at the time and it was probably 'hero worship.' I remember the sheriff riding a beautiful white horse up and down Main Street. He would sometimes ride into my father's drug store and give his horse an ice cream cone. I thought that was wonderful."

Another story was told me by a woman whose family and the Garretts were close friends and whose brother-in-law later became one of Garrett's deputies. She said, "As a young girl I went to work in the Kress Store at Ardmore. Buck Garrett's niece who was about my age and a good friend of mine also worked there. We were both young and a bit on the headstrong side and we made it up together to go to a dance out at Wilson, a few miles from Ardmore, after work. Our boy friends were to meet us and drive us out there.

"We went directly from the store and did not tell our folks because we were afraid they would not let us go, so my sister, with whom I was staying at the time, became alarmed when I did not come home. She walked to town later on in the evening looking for me and, going down Washington Street, met Buck Garrett just as he was coming out of the post office.

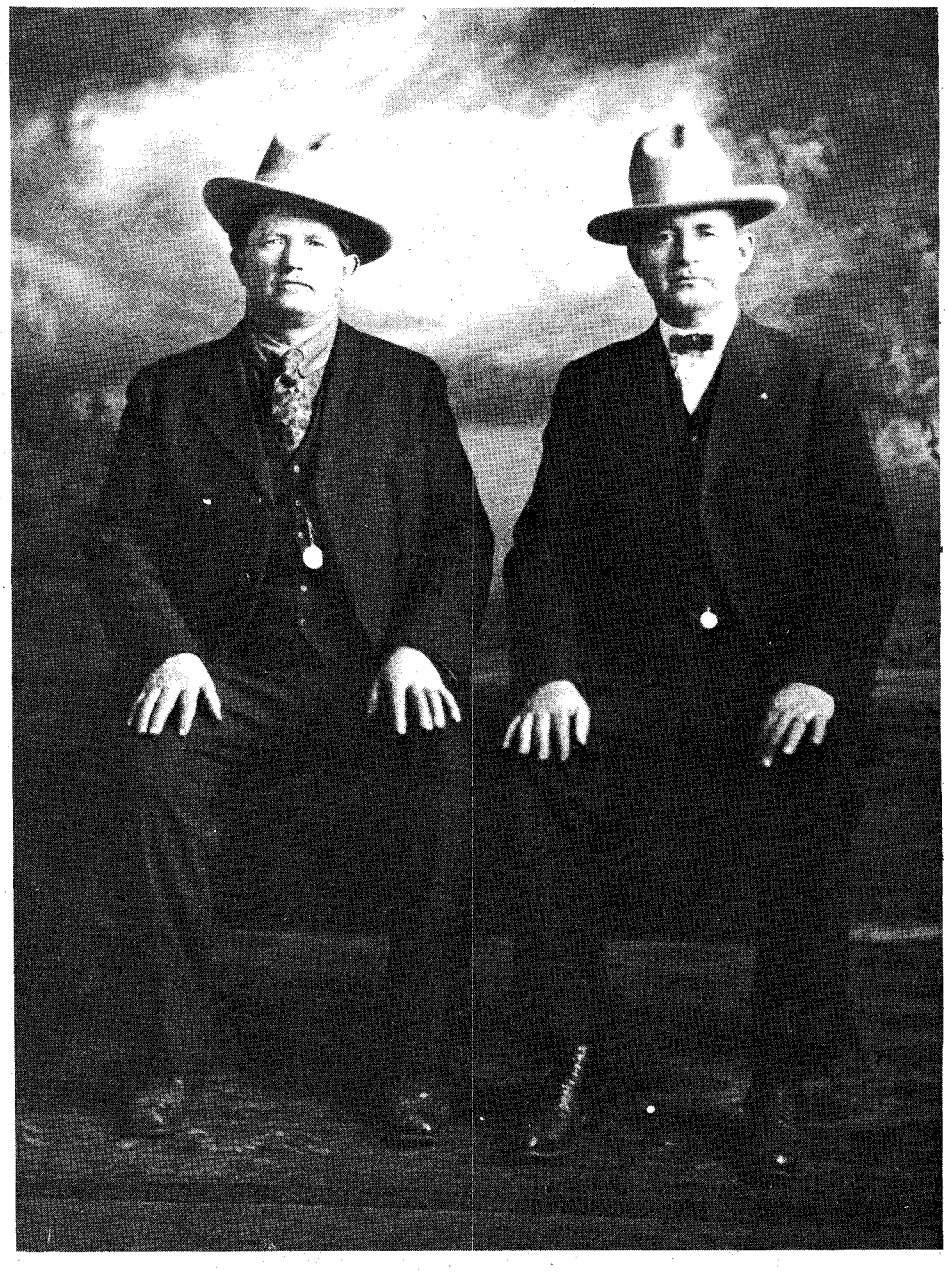
"'Why are you so upset?' he asked, recognizing her at once and noticing her agitation.

"'My little sister hasn't come home from work and I think she has probably gone to that dance at Wilson,' she replied.

"'Don't worry,' said the sheriff, 'I'll go out there and see that she gets home safely.' My sister went home knowing that she could trust him to do exactly what he said.

"When I saw him come in," related the woman telling me this story, "I knew he had come for me. He hadn't known until he got there that his own niece (his sister's daughter) was with me. But when he saw her on the dance floor he called her also. As for me I guessed at once that my sister had asked him to come and get me.

"He was a quiet, soft-spoken man. He told me pleasantly that my sister was very uneasy and he thought we girls should go home with him. We did so without argument and it was lucky for us that we did. The boys, who were both quite a bit older than we were, stayed on. The next morning their car was found overturned in a ditch near Wilson. Both boys were dead, having apparently been knocked unconscious when thrown into the ditch which had water in it. They had drowned."



Under-sheriff Bud Ballew and Sheriff Buck Garrett.

All who knew Garrett speak of his generosity. One of his great works of charity was his regular donation to the Salvation Army. He would contact Captain Maggie Knobbs, a wonderful person herself, then in charge of the Citadel and tell her at Christmas time, "Now you go ahead and make your plans to help the needy, make your drive, and whatever you are lacking for and need, I will supply." And he always did.

As one man remarked, "Buck could always be counted on to donate to everything, asked or unasked—if he thought an organization or a person needed help he was right there doing all he could!"

Another thing the sheriff did that was, as the saying goes, "over and above the call of duty" was to see that a man he arrested had a good legal counsel—even if he knew the man was guilty—even if the man were a killer. Lawyers supplied by the court in those days often left too much to be desired and there were many times when Garrett hired counsel at his own expense to defend a man he himself had brought to justice.

THIS LAWMAN who went into the thick of many a fight unarmed and made his arrests with a great deal of courage was given more notoriety than he deserved, perhaps, because he was so often there when somebody got killed. An eye-witness told me this story: "My sister and I were walking on the opposite side of the street from the Simpson Building [now the Little Building] late one afternoon when we noticed Buck Garrett and one of his deputies standing in the shade of the building talking. A man

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with a little girl in a car came driving around the corner and stopped. The man got out and we heard, but could not distinguish any words, a loud conversation going on across the street. The people were partly obscured by the car and presently we heard a shot ring out. The deputy who apparently had had a heated argument with the man, had fired. Perhaps the man had drawn on him. We could not see. I can still remember that poor little girl sitting on the curb and crying pitifully and Sheriff Garrett bending down to pick her up." This incident occurred on Ardmore's Main Street.

It is said that as the years went on, the sheriff became too powerful and "ran the county from the courts down to the smallest governmental function." A common expression then was, "If you know the sheriff, you can get away with murder!" The story has it that a "reform group" succeeded in ousting Garrett from the office he had held so long. But digging a little deeper and not being quite satisfied with this version—and after talking with many people who knew him—a rather different story began to emerge.

The Ku Klux Klan had become very powerful and many influential Carter County citizens were taking part in its secret, white-robed activities. One of the people I talked to told me this story: "I was spending the night with my sister who lived near Graham [Oklahoma] and she woke me up about two o'clock and, motioning me to be very quiet, led me to a window. I peeped out and saw a veritable sea of waving white garments going silently past—the Klansmen on their way to a secret rendezvous. I never forgot that night!"

She went on to tell me that Garrett realizing, of course, how fast the organization was growing, knew what it would mean if they were allowed to continue unchecked. Incidents began to occur. One involved a schoolteacher named Bagwell who lived at Springer and who was said to be a Socialist. Feeling against him ran high. One night the Klan burned the fiery cross at his home and ordered him to leave. It is said that he did not go but all this created quite a stir and eventually led to more serious events.

Soon afterward Garrett found out about a meeting the Klan was having after which they planned to go and beat up a man because of some family problem one of their number was having with him. Garrett took two of his deputies, Jim "Red" Carter and Bud Ballew, and broke up the meeting. In the ensuing brawl a Klansman was killed and many others arrested and jailed. This was the beginning of the enmity between Buck Garrett and the KKK who could not understand his interference. They worked against him and eventually terminated his career as sheriff. An excerpt from the *Daily Oklahoman* of January, 1922, states: "Buck Garrett, the sheriff monarch of Carter County, was removed from office."

Perhaps it was not a question of Buck Garrett becoming "too powerful" but of others wanting the power for themselves. In any event, he was not able to overcome the opposition and was succeeded by Ewing London, an insurance man.

Deputy, Dow Brazil

Since the death of Garrett's deputy also occurred in 1922 I would like to mention briefly another excerpt from the *Daily Oklahoman* of that year: "Bud Ballew, colorful, fast-shooting undersheriff and aid to Buck Garrett of Carter County, shot too late at Wichita Falls [Texas]." Bud was shot by a police officer in Wichita Falls under somewhat mysterious circumstances which were never really explained.

That Buck Garrett had been right in his estimation of the growing strength of the Ku Klux Klan was proven by what happened in 1923. Again quoting from the *Daily Oklahoman:* "Jack Walton [Governor of Oklahoma] put part of Oklahoma under martial law for KKK floggings on August 13th. . . . The National Guard came to Oklahoma City on September 16th. On September 24th Walton put the whole state under martial law and on December 7th of that same year the legislature passed a bill preventing the KKK from meeting in public."

GARRETT lived for seven or eight years after being ousted as sheriff and during at least a part of that time kept an office in the Simpson Building where he transacted his oil business and attended to other interests. One of the girls who worked there at that time running the elevator said of him, "He was the most courteous of men, always meticulously dressed, and invariably pleasant to everyone."

I was told that Garrett's personal life had been a turbulent one. His wife, "Ma" Garrett as everyone called her, was a large, heavy woman. She had an extensive vocabulary of "cuss" words and used them frequently, yet those who knew her best have always declared her to be the most generous and kindly of women. The proverbial "heart of gold." One of the men who lived at her rooming house, which was located near the high school on North Washington when he first came to Ardmore as a young man about 1917, told me, "She could not have looked after me more kindly and carefully had I been her own son."

With all her good qualities, however, Mrs. Garrett was a woman plain almost to the point of homeliness, and she was married to a very handsome man. Moreover he had that quality which today we call charisma and women simply would not leave him alone.

There is also a story of two attractive young girls who came from the country to Ma Garrett's boarding house and whom she befriended. They had little money and she gave them a room, helped them buy clothing and was generally kindly and helpful. They repaid her by "making up" to her husband and he became very friendly with them. It is said that he later built an apartment house and installed them there.

Garrett, as sheriff, was a big man in the community; he had many business opportunities opened up to him and made a good deal of money out of oil. He made it fast, as did others in the boom days, and he spent it fast as well, using it to buy the things he liked best and wanted most.

(Continued on page 44)

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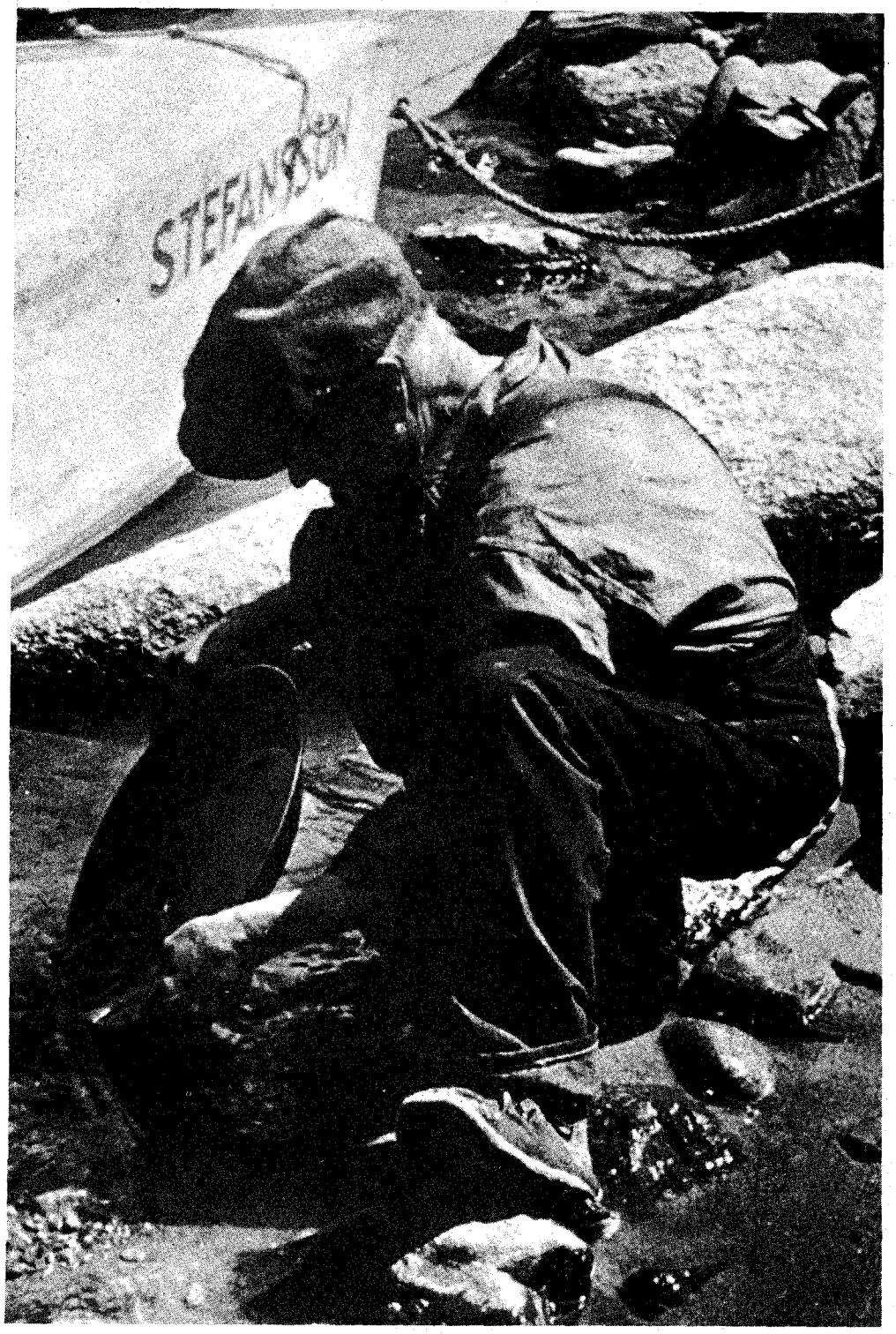
HERMIT OF THE

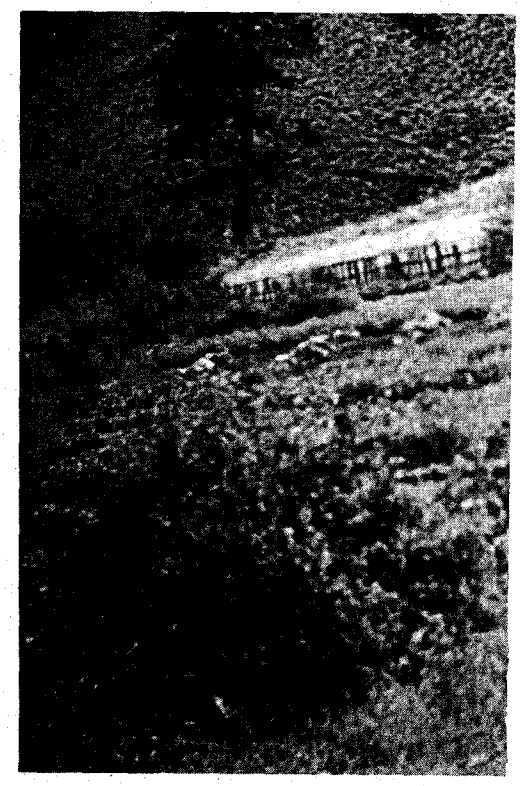
How to live on 8¢ a day! then you don't have



Above, the hermit washes a pan of gold-bearing sand in the waters of the Middle Fork on the Salmon River.

IN 1939 I was invited to make a boat trip down the Middle Fork of Salmon River by Dr. Russell G. Frazier, Antarctic explorer, and Amos Berg, National Geographic photographer. Dr. Frazier and his river crew had been through this canyon once before, at which time they wrecked a boat in one of the rapids and had to walk out, but the river was new to me. We trucked our boats from Salt Lake City to Stanley Basin in Idaho, then through Bear Valley to the Middle Fork, the only place where trucks could reach the river.

We put our boats in on April 15. It was rather early and the water was ice cold, but if we waited until later the river would be too low for navigation. The upper part of the river was full of boulders, making navigation difficult and keeping us constantly wet from the icy water. We had two bad upsets in some



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MIDDLE FORK

Of course, you can't afford too many callers, but many if your front door's on top of a ladder!

By CHARLES KELLY

Photos Courtesy Author

of the rapids and punched the bottoms out of two boats on the sharp rocks but otherwise got through without too much trouble.

As we reached the lower section of the river Dr. Frazier warned us to watch on the left bank for a dim trail which led up to the cabin of an old hermit whom Doc had met on his first expedition. We spotted it about four miles above the junction of Middle Fork and the main Salmon River. Doc had brought along a bag of salt for the old man, which he knew would be welcome, and I took along half a box of cigars which Doc said the hermit would enjoy.

Taking the faint trail we started climbing the 1,000-foot cliff to the top where the hermit had his cabin. It was very steep and in places the old man had built ladders to make the climbing safer. At last we reached the top and continued a short distance across the flat mountaintop to a small cabin we could see in the distance. As we approached, the old man saw us and came out to see who the strangers were. When he recognized Dr. Frazier a big smile spread over his face. Doc delivered the salt and I donated the cigars. The old fellow immediately lit one, blowing out great clouds of smoke to indicate his pleasure in such a luxury.

The hermit in front of his bountiful garden.

I was full of questions, of course, and began quizzing the old hermit on how he happened to locate in such an inaccessible place. Here is his story:

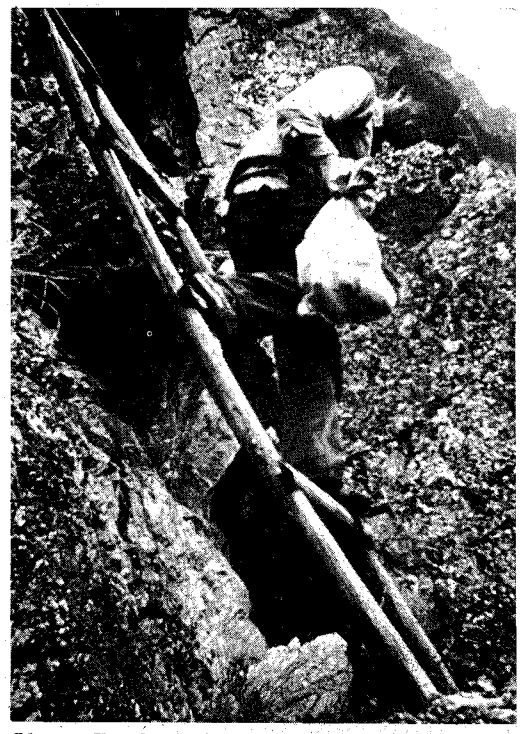
"WELL," he said, "the answer to your question is very simple. You see I went to the Klondike in 1898, leaving behind a girl who had promised to marry me when I returned a rich man. When I finally did get back she had got tired of waiting and had married another man. After I heard of the Salmon River gold rush I came here and panned gold on the river. I had very good luck and put my money in a bank in town. It was only a short time until the bank went bust. With having lost confidence in both women and men I hunted out this place and have been here ever since. It suits me fine and no one can ever make me move."

As we walked toward the cabin we passed as beautiful a garden as you ever saw, fenced with aspen poles. The old man said he dried all his vegetables and stored them for winter, and to prove the fertility of his garden he gave us a sack of the most marvelous potatoes one could wish for. A small creek ran through the little valley and with this he irrigated his large garden.

"Don't deer jump the fence and eat your garden stuff?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied," "but when they get in and look around they see that they are completely surrounded by a fence and jump right out again."

The old hermit lived by panning gold out of the sands along the Middle Fork in the summer. He had built a crude bed four feet square under a large pine tree on a bar at the foot of his mountain trail, and while panning gold slept there rather than make the steep climb every day. He told us that he was almost entirely self-sufficient and that he lived on an



Above, Frank Swain of Dr. Frazier's river party descends one of the ladders on the trail to the hermit's cabin. He carries a sack of the hermit's superb potatoes. Below, the hermit puffs on a cigar given him by one of Dr. Frazier's party.

average of eight cents a day. He bought only salt, matches, ammunition and a few nails. In order to get supplies he had to walk out to a town thirty miles away, and pack his supplies on his back. Occasionally he would pick up a discarded auto tire which he used to make shoe soles with tops made of buckskin. He was wearing a pair of these homemade shoes which had never been

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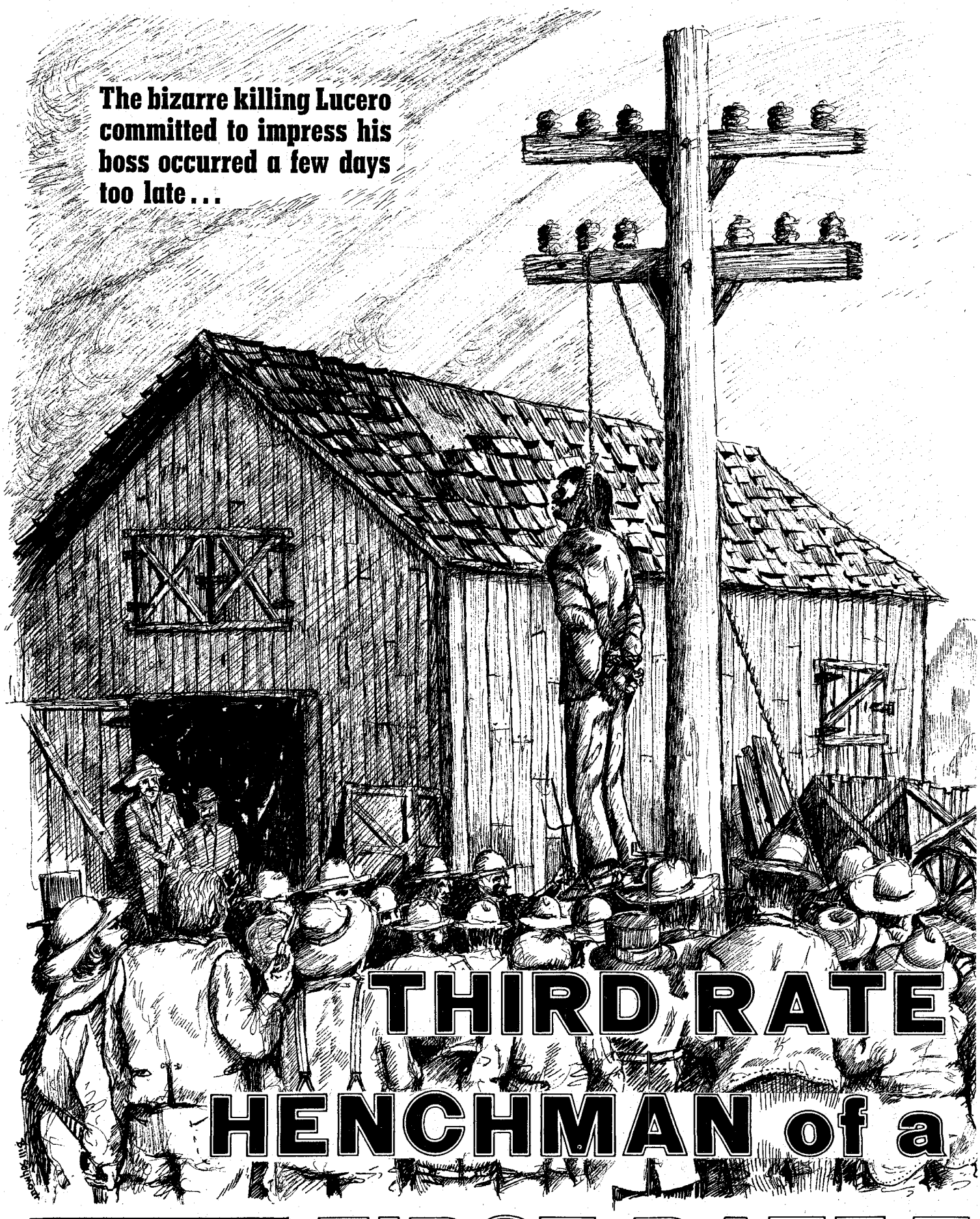

The bizarre killing Lucero committed to impress his boss occurred a few days too late...

THIRD RATE HENCHMAN of a FIRST RATE T

By MITCHELL C. SENA

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The drawings on this page are from the original 1896 Spanish edition of **Vicente Silva**, by Manuel De Baca, and reprinted from **New Mexico in the 19th Century: A Pictorial History**, University of New Mexico Press, 1968.

THE dying days of a dry spring were encroaching into early summer; around Las Vegas, New Mexico the brave shoots of grass and weeds in the prairies were crying for rain. It was morning on a clear day in late May 1893. Juan Aragon was driving his team hitched to a Studebaker wagon from Vegoso to Las Vegas, nine miles distant.

The clearness of the air made it possible for one to see many miles in any direction. This enabled Juan to spot two animals wandering around the prairie about two miles from the road; they were dragging something behind them, which aroused the curiosity of the teamster. Unhitching one of the horses, Juan mounted and galloped his steed toward what turned out to be two burros. When he caught up with them he got the shock of his life! Each burro was dragging the body of a man, tied to the end of a rope. The heads of the victims had been battered beyond recognition. Juan hobbled the animals so they couldn't get away, got on his horse and headed for his wagon, where he rehitched, then drove as fast as the team could travel to Las Vegas. Arriving at the San Miguel county jail in Old Town he related his find to the authorities.

It was not hard to guess that some of the Silva gang had committed these murders. Vicente Silva, who led forty desperados in stealing, arson and murder, had himself not been heard from for almost two months, but the gang, although in the process of going to pieces after ten years of dominating by terror the communities of northern New Mexico during the latter 1880s and early 1890s, was still active. Several months before, a man had been split in half by the gang tying each of his legs to a wild mule, after which the animals were driven in opposite directions. The latest victims were identified as Benigno Martinez, a sheepman from Las Vegas, and one of his sheepherders, Juan Gallegos. Their camp was near the scene of the murder. The killer, after shooting each man, used stones to bash their heads, then tied their legs together and hitched each body to a burro by attaching a rope to the burro's neck. In order to urge the burros to run, the killer had tied tin cans to their tails with wire.

CECILIO LUCERO was one of the last to join Silva. He was young, tall, athletic and had an innocent-looking sort of handsomeness which would hardly

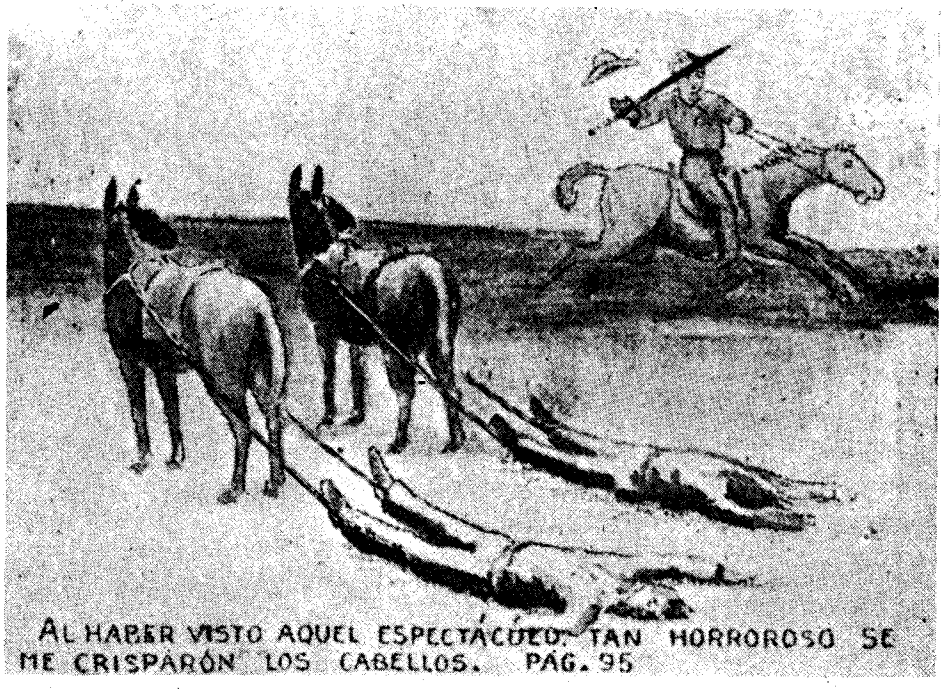
(Continued on page 40)

Vicente Silva

Vicente Silva lured his wife to their ranch north of Las Vegas and stabbed her.

One of Silva's own men, José Antonio Valdez, cocks his forty-five and blasts a bullet into his leader's temple.

Cecilio Lucero murdered his cousin and a shepherd, tied the bodies behind two burros, and let them drag the evidence away.



ERROR

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THE CAMP THAT DIED HARD

Courtesy Mrs. Alta Pitcher, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Rochester, Montana, about the turn of the century, as seen from a hill overlooking the town. The Watseka Mine is on the left, the Goodale on the right.

By GRACE ROFFEY PRATT

Photos Courtesy Author

"WELL, there's Rochester." Our old friend, Harry High, raised his arm and pointed to the left as we bumped along over the rocks and ruts that passed for a road. I looked, and I couldn't believe.

I closed my eyes and I could remember Rochester. Its two main streets were roads really, with Rochester Creek running crookedly between them. That is, it ran bankful with chocolate-colored fluid when there was a hard rain or cloudburst in the hills. Other times the creek bed was dry. I could see the big (for a small mining camp) Hardisty Hotel, Hungate's Boarding House, the old store building the young men worked over into a dance hall, the rock-walled hut we youngsters used for a club house, the built-for-duty-not-beauty school house on the hill. There was the Cooper home where Mrs. Hamilton Cooper kept the diminutive post office in her front room. Mr. John Connor's two neat cottages with yellow rose bushes in front and pansy beds in the back, Johnny Mahoney's and Ed Maloney's log cabins and a dozen others. Without difficulty I could envision the trail which zig-zagged up over the south hill to the Gold Coin and Emma Mines and, most vividly of all, the red mill of the Watseka with its smokestacks gray and stark against the sky.

Yes, with my eyes closed I could see the Rochester I had known, an unadorned little town yet somehow appealing, sitting like a cup in a saucer among the near naked hills of Madison County in southwestern Montana. But with open eyes, I could see nothing but sagebrush; not even the creek bed was visible. Not

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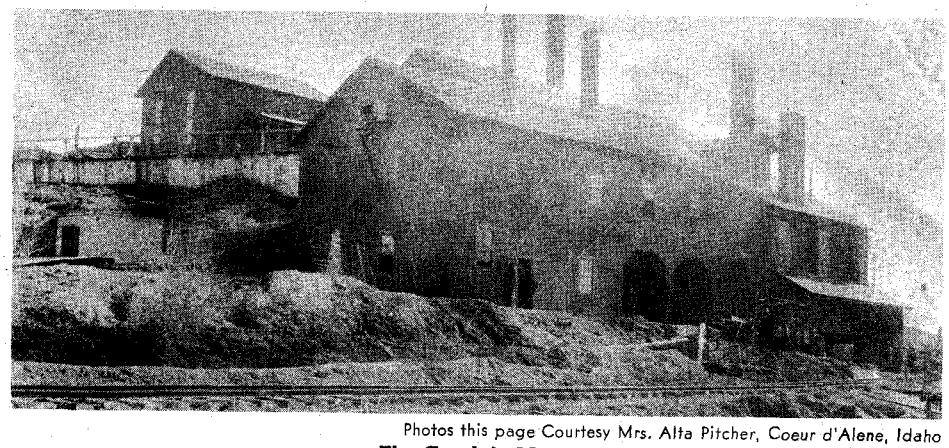
Every family in Rochester clung to the Watseka—THE MINE— an ephemeral "rich uncle" who would take over one day and solve every problem and dry every tear. Good times were just around the corner, they said; it was foolish and disloyal to doubt!

until I had located the little cemetery across the ravine from us, and over the tops of the sage the waste dumps of the Watseka, could I believe that our friend was not kidding.

Down at Twin Bridges where we had left our trailer and picked up Harry, we had been told, "There is nothing at Rochester." But that is a way people have of speaking of a place which is merely deserted. I had thought some of the old buildings would be there, for some of them, such as our club house, had been very substantial. I had expected the roads and the trail over the hill to be where I'd left them, and foolishly I had also supposed there would be something other than the sage-grown waste dumps to identify the Watseka. Like others who had once caught the spirit of that optimistic camp, I could scarcely accept the fact that Rochester and the mine that was to have made it great were completely erased from the map.



Photos this page Courtesy Mrs. Alta Pitcher, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

The Goodale Mine.

THE history of Rochester dates back to Montana's territorial days. In the gold rushes to Bannack and Alder Gulch in 1863 and '64, some of the gold seekers arrived too late to get in on the good diggings and so went prospecting along streams and in other gulches trying to run onto something just as good. A few of these hopefuls, in tramping over the foothills of the McCarty Range about forty miles north of Adler Gulch and ten miles east of the Big Hole River, stumbled onto some coarse placer gold in the ravines above where a canyon opens up into a basin.

They staked out claims and packed in supplies, followed by a number of other prospectors—but there was no great stampede. The gold was not of the same quality or quantity as that of Alder Gulch and except for one good set of springs, which they named Rabbit Springs because of the numerous rabbits that watered there, it was a dry country most of the year. This meant that the gold had to be separated from the gravel in which it lay by sifting and fanning with primitive equipment, or the gold-

The Watseka Mine, about 1900.

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bearing gravel had to be sacked up and "toted to Rabbit Springs to slick off the dirt." Packing the gravel from a few hundred yards to several miles, depending on the location of the claim, was no small job. One man even hauled his gravel ten miles down to the river to wash it.

No one got rich overnight and the hard work didn't appeal to all who tried it, most of whom soon left, but those who had what it took to stay did fairly well. A site was chosen for a permanent camp three miles from Rabbit Springs. A well was dug and the water was hard but drinkable. Logs were hauled about eight miles from Camp Creek. When the families of a few of the men arrived, the town of Rochester was born. That was in 1865.

Three years later, someone, and the records fail to state who, discovered gold-bearing quartz not far from camp. Very shortly a claim named the Watseka was acquired by Woodruff, Hendry and Vaughn who built two crude ten-stamp mills. This brought a sizeable flock of miners to the camp, most of whom staked out claims of their own, but quite a number leased sections of the Watseka property which right from the beginning inspired hopes of its becoming a great mine. Folks dreamed and talked of a big gold camp that would not be worked out in a few years as were the placers. They built their houses on good foundations, they put up a log schoolhouse, and hired a teacher. They were there to stay.

Among the names of those early-timers are some still well remembered for they have descendants living down in the valley. A few of these are Sam Claridge, William Klein, Christofer Stoker, Frank Reid, Walter Pitcher and L. A. Thompson.

In two years from the time of discovery, the Watseka produced so well that the original owners were able to sell at a profit to F. R. Merk who patented the mine. Surface ores assayed from $200 to $300 per ton but because of crude equipment (and perhaps other reasons) considerable gold was lost and shipping expenses ran high. The concentrate had to be freighted by ox or mule team to Fort Benton on the Missouri or to Salt Lake City in Utah, either way a distance of more than 200 miles over primitive roads, while all supplies for mining and milling had to be brought in the same way. So in spite of good ores, Merk did not operate at any great profit and when the surface ores gave out he lacked the capital with which to sink. The leasees had to quit. It was such a blow to the little mining town that in a short time Rochester was almost abandoned. Only a few miners stayed on, working their own claims, hauling their own ore to Fort Benton, making a living of sorts and believing in the Watseka.

IN 1891 Dave Brinker, a Butte mining man, bonded the Watseka but soon he discovered that he did not have the money needed to do much sinking. However he had faith in the venture and was able to interest the Colorado Company of Butte who sent C. O. Goodale out to take charge. Men were put to work sink-

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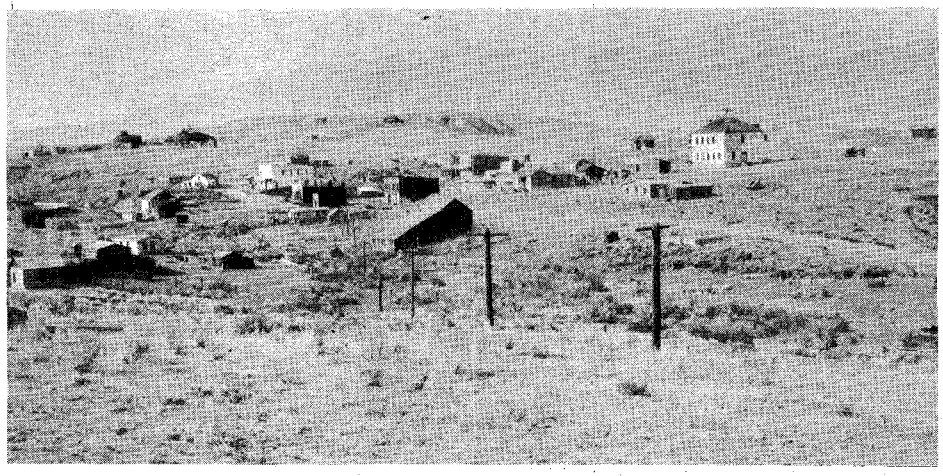
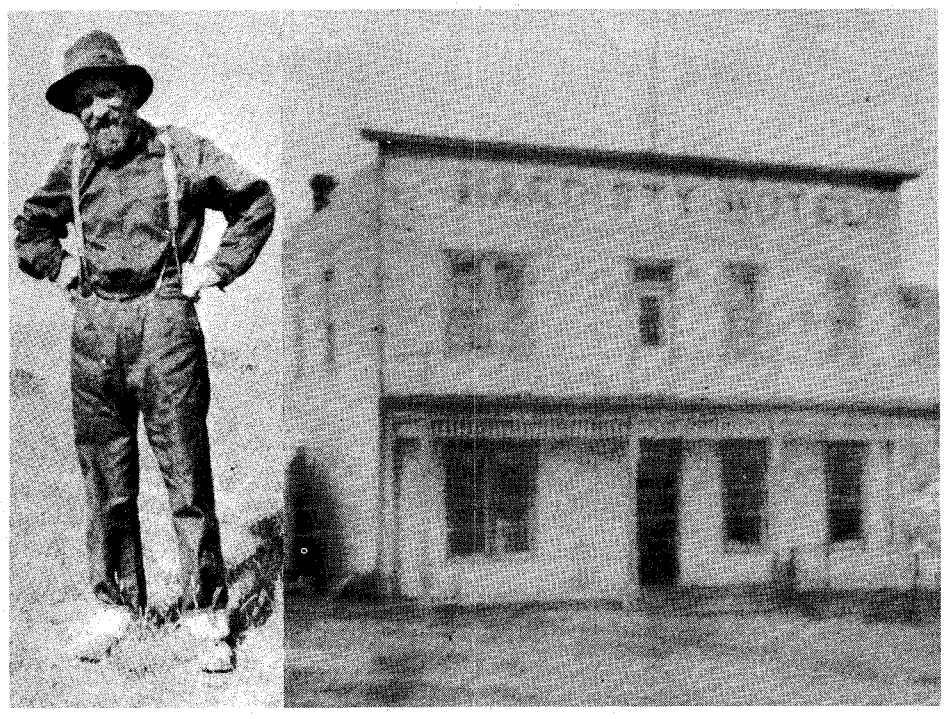


Another view of Rochester, 1912. The schoolhouse is the square, two-story building on the hill.

Charles Lashbrook hauling ore from the Emma Mine in 1913.

Below, left, James R. Webb, the author's father, 1912.



The Hardisty Hotel, 1912.

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Wild Old Days!

"TABLE STEAKS"

By Herbert E. Smith

IT WAS CLOSE to midnight when that courtly southern gentleman roving gambler, Roanoke Red, cleaned out the local banker-stockman in the head-to-head poker game at the Coconino, Arizona Territory, Red Eye Saloon one early spring night in the mid-1880s.

"Big Van," the local tycoon, reluctantly rose from his seat. "Sorry, Colonel, but I find myself flat out of ready cash, much as I'd like to carry on the game with you."

The redheaded Confederate veteran chuckled softly. "That difficulty presents no insurmountable problem. I understand you've just acquired considerable stock at your spread outside town. Would you be interested in continuing our little session with the cattle as I.O.U. chips? One steer ante, say? Two to open, and a five head limit bet?"

"Agreed!" Big Van declared. He reseated himself at the huge round table, and the crowd of cowboys, miners, merchants and bar girls which had begun to drift away returned to circle around the back of the gambling table.

Roanoke Red dealt the first new hand and Van anted up one 2-year-old heifer. Both men, after the draw, came in with four steers of the banker's against the gambler's matching four blue chips. The gentleman from Virginia drew two tens to fill a full house, and the banker dropped out.

The next hand was a declared jackpot, taking three straight deals before it could be opened by Van who had caught a pair of queens. He opened with a fine breeding bull, rated the equivalent of the five steer limit bet. The Virginian matched the ante and, with his string of luck continuing, raked in the fat pot on his standpat hand of three jacks.

So the hectic poker game continued, far into the wee small hours. At half past three, Big Van resignedly paid the bar bill with five cows, two mustangs and a fine Mexican saddle. Then he rose from the table again, nodded to his successful opponent and bowed out, relieved of all his new stock as well as his cash in hand.

But it didn't faze big Frank Vanderlip the least bit. From the little local bank of which he had been president he went on, in later years, to become the chief executive of the National City Bank of New York City.

CEDAR CUTTERS, HOUNDDOG MEN AND HORSE TRADERS

By C. W. Wimberley

I NEVER KNEW a Texas cedar cutter who wouldn't recommend himself pretty highly, or saw a hounddog man who wouldn't brag on his dogs, or found a horse trader I could out-talk or catch in a lie. Everytime I thought I had one of them hemmed-in on something a little hard to swallow, he would explain things in a way which would make me feel dumb sorry for doubting his word in the first place. Guess they've got a way of seeing their facts in a different light than most folks.

One time a horse trader palmed off an old mare on me, and to this day I have yet to figure out how he did it. All he really did was guarantee the old mare to be worth more money than she actually looked like she was worth. My mother-in-law was a fair judge of horse flesh, and with one look at this mare she said, "Poor old thing—not worth two cents in Mexican money." Then, looking straight at me, she added, "When the word gets around, you are goin' to be the laughing stock in this end of the county for some time to come."

Sure enough, next day my brother-in-law shows up with a gloatin' grin on his face and starts in before he even gets close to my old mare. "Blind in one eye," he pronounced. "Be as grey as a rat when that brown shoe polish is washed out." Looking her in the mouth, he cheered me up a little more, "Pretty a job as ever I seen on cuttin' new cups in old teeth. Must'a used dentist tools."

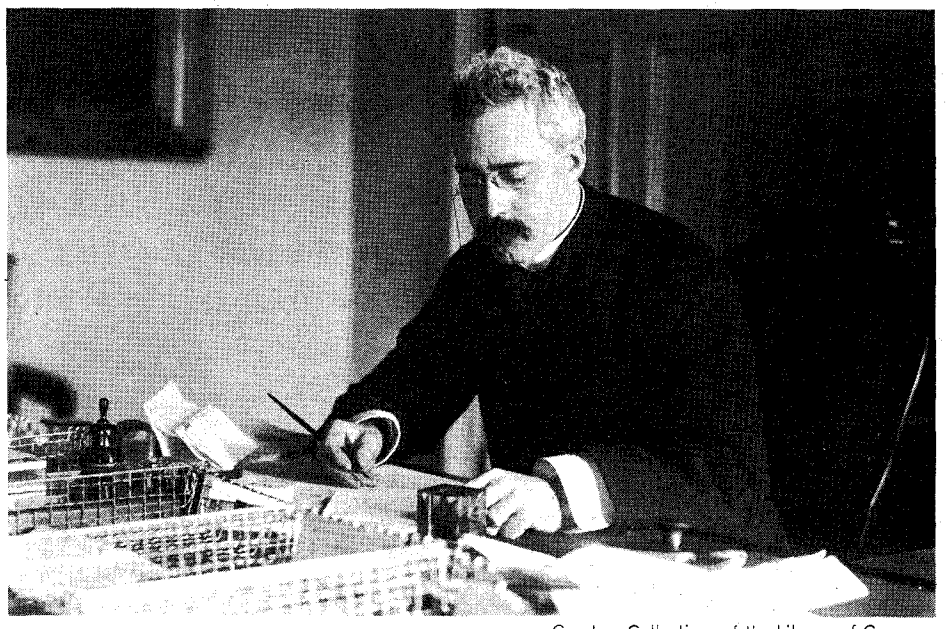
He didn't waste any words on the fire-cut front foot or the fistula on her back, but began probing her left shoulder with his fingers. "Ah, here it is—had the sweeny, an' they put a hot dime in the shoulder muscle here to cure it. Feel."

Now I knew why that horse trader's guarantee was good; and for once my mother-in-law had let one get by her. My old mare was worth a good American dime, and had a lump in her shoulder to prove it!

BACK WHEN cedar posts were dirt cheap, a cedar cutter they called Honest John taught me another little lesson. Blowing about how he could handle an ax and cut forty dollars in cedar any day, he offered to bet me that he could go out into the middle of my pasture, chop down twenty dollars worth of post, and have them in the cedar yard before dinnertime, or I could keep the post he had cut. Figuring on getting some post cut for free, I called his bet.

I was in the cow pens next morning when John and his wife went by with all nine of their kids in and all over his Model "A" sedan. By the time I had done the chores and saddled up, here comes that Ford back down the road, and it was a sight to see. Held by baling wire, a bundle of long post rode each front fender, with ends sticking out both sides of the car. The rear windows were crammed full of post. Racked on two posts extending from under the rear-end and over the back bumper, more were piled to the top of the rear window. Occupying the front seat were two of John's three-foot-high kids—one was

(Continued on page 40)



Courtesy Collections of the Library of Congress

Frank A. Vanderlip became chief executive of the National City Bank of New York City. This is an 1899 photo by T. B. Johnson.

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Camps of the Nut

Piñon trees heavily loaded with nut cones.

By JOHN R. WINSLOWE
Photos Courtesy Author

For centuries Indians have ventured forth to harvest a windfall peculiarly theirs—miracle morsels from the gods of old . . .

INDIANS gathering piñon nuts south of the Grand Canyon rim were snowed in and starving when their desperate situation became known. Park rangers, county and Indian agency officials were able to reach them before any deaths occurred; fortunately, only ten required hospitalization.

Not so lucky were 500 Indians south of Pie Town and Quemado, New Mexico a year later. One storm followed another during November and early December. The widely scattered, isolated nut pickers' camps were frozen in tight. They ate all the nuts they had gathered before the first storm stopped them. Finally one of the strongest managed to reach the outside world. Indian agency personnel and New Mexico officers hastened to their aid. An airplane dropped food to the camps that could be spotted. Bulldozers and tractors fought through twenty- and thirty-foot snowbanks in below zero weather to reach them.

The Indians were hauled out, but not before eleven of them were dead. More than one hundred required hospitalization. Some lost limbs, and one woman, her eyesight.

Why did the Indians assume these risks and take a chance of meeting disaster in such uninhabited dangerous areas? They were following the piñon crop, for it played a major role in their economy. The nuts are an important food, and beyond that a cash crop with which to buy other necessities.

THE two-needled piñon, *Pinus edulis*, produces a food nut which was used

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Pickers

by the first aborigines to set foot in the Southwest. The shaggy evergreen tree of the high plateau country was a staple the year around. To tribes who cultivated maize it was second only to corn. Nuts were harvested and stored by the basket makers who preceded the cliff dwellers.

The nut storage pits of the ancients were lined with stone. These pits have been found from the Colorado River in the west to Las Vegas, New Mexico, and north into southern Utah and Colorado. When all else failed there was the little brown nut to fall back on. Ground squirrels and pack rats also gathered them. Knowing this fact has kept many people from starving to death, down through Indian history into modern times. There is no Indian tribe in New Mexico and Arizona without dozens of stories about how a pack rat's nest saved someone, or an entire family from starvation.

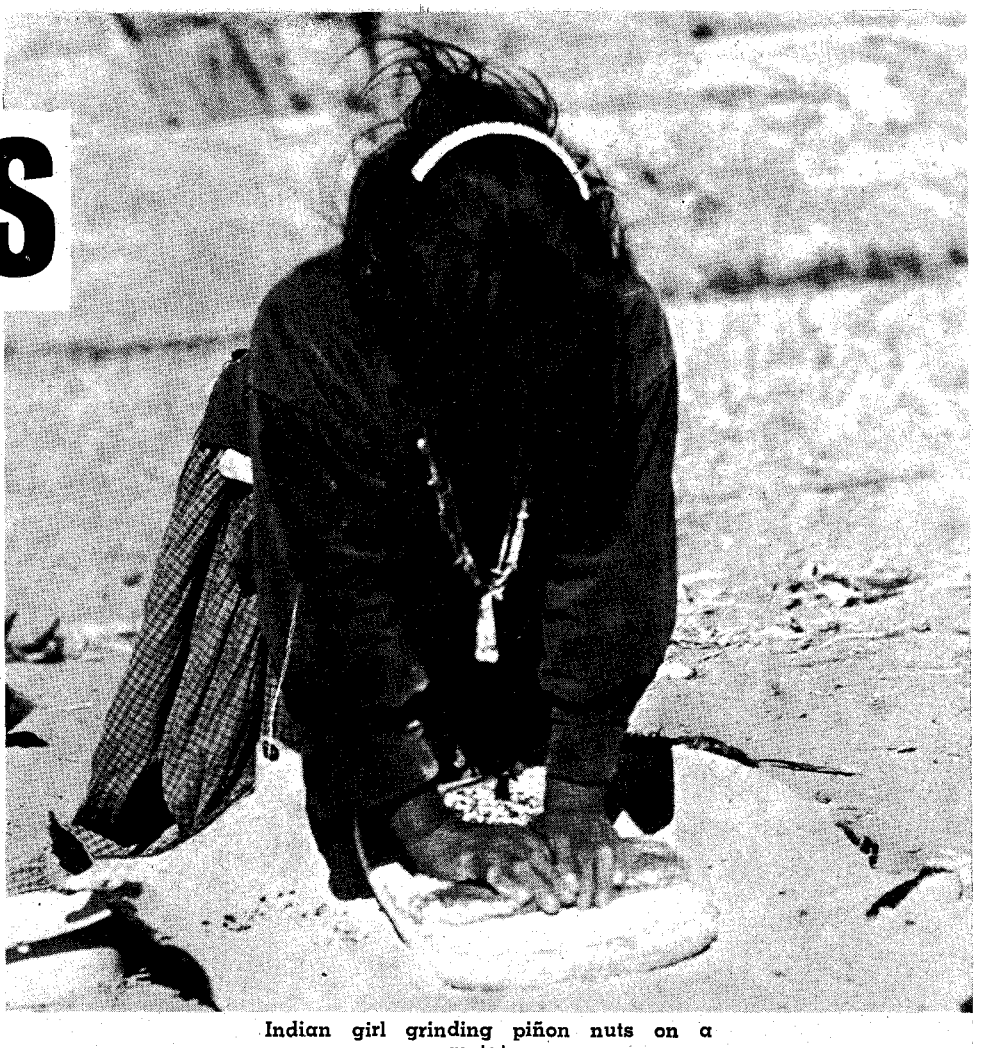
In a very old case, Pueblo Indians—fleeing Spanish vengeance after the 1680 rebellion of the tribes—ran out of food while heading for sanctuary in the Hopi country. This group, more than two hundred people, was saved and enabled to reach the far western pueblos by robbing pack rat nests in the forest near present St. Michaels, Arizona.

When I was an Indian trader on the great Navajo Reservation a score or more Indians, each alone, lost, beset by fierce storms and without so much as a pocket knife, survived. They had sense enough to hunt for nuts stored the previous fall in the nests of pack rats or ground squirrels.

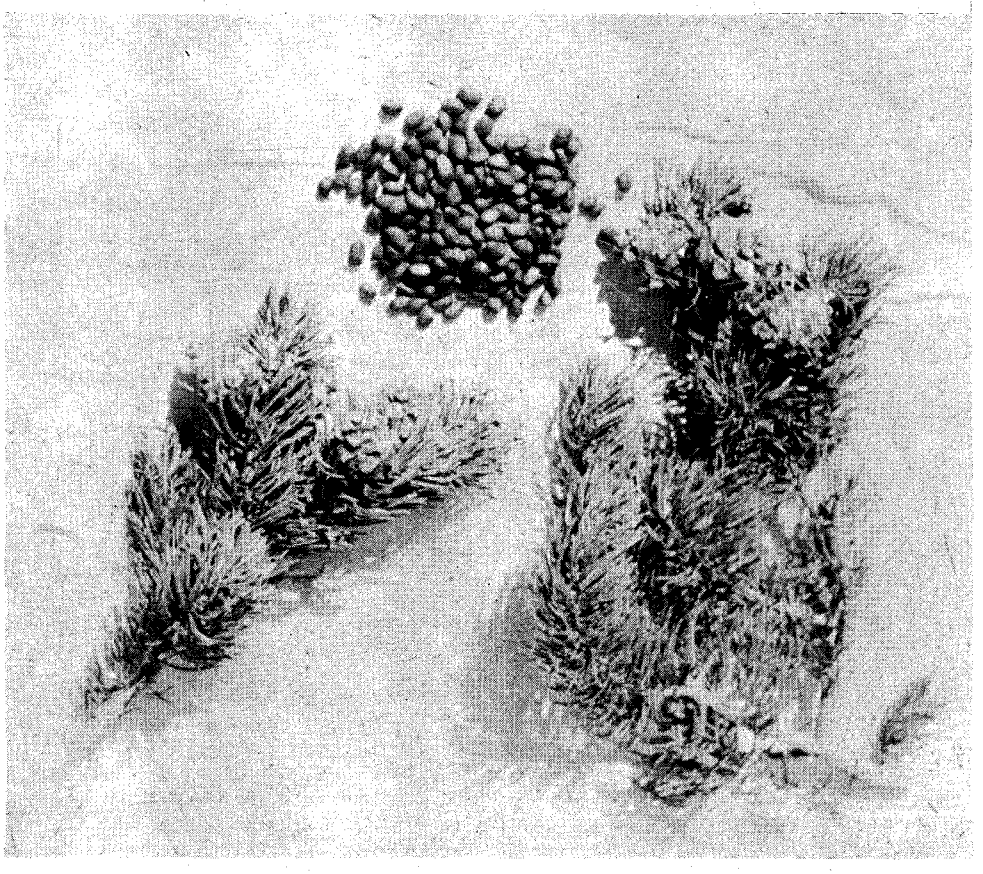
Not until the early 1920s did piñon nuts become a cash crop in addition to being a valuable source of food. Machines were invented to hull the nut. Packaged and marketed it was sold from coast to coast. It is used in many ways by the white man, as a tidbit like salted peanuts, and in pastry and candy. The Indians of the deep Southwest have more than fifty ways of preparing appetizing dishes using the piñon, from a tasty additive to stews and gruels to the sweetest of cakes and cookies. It is truly their breadfruit tree.

After natural drying, the nuts are boiled, parched or roasted. They are ground to fine flour on stone *metates* just as they were centuries ago. Since the meat contains considerable oil the way in which they will be used has a lot to do with the preparation. Some of the oil is disposed of by boiling and parching.

Once reduced to flour a variety of dishes are in order. Sometimes the flour is made into a thin gruel and then cooked quickly on thin sheets of metal, or on heated stones like the Hopi wafer-thin *piki* bread. Of course, the flour is most



Indian girl grinding piñon nuts on a metate.



Nut cones as they appear on the limbs along with the small brown nuts after separation.

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Navajo woman gathering piñons.

often used in making flat bread which is cooked in a Dutch oven or in a stove pan just like wheat flour bread. However, yeast and baking powder have no effect on piñon flour unless it is mixed with more than half wheat flour, by which adulteration it loses most of its identity.

Made into thick dough with a little goat's milk, the flour can be wrapped in corn shucks and baked in beds of coals, or over a fire pit. This is one of the best, easiest and quickest means Indians can turn it into breadstuff.

When first removed from the cones the nuts are "green." But they are eaten this way, especially by pickers in the forest. More often the nuts are roasted in hot ashes or parched in a container near the fire, very much like the common peanut. During the nut season an Indian traveling anywhere by horseback will carry a pocketful of piñons to eat along the trail. He may even stop by a handy tree and pick a few.

One customary cooking method of the Navajo, Hopi and Utes is to boil the nuts. This removes the resin from the hulls and a large part of the oil. The scum collected in the pot is continually skimmed off the water. The nuts are then dried again, roasted and ground into flour. Although easily shelled after this process, the Indian seems at no time to have any difficulty eating them without swallowing the hull. Piñons in the shell (and also when green) go into one corner of the mouth and, while the Indian keeps chewing away, the empty covering comes out the other. This is a nice trick if you are adept at it. Dry piñons can be placed on a hard flat surface and rolled with a block of wood to remove the shells.

At one time a few wild grass seeds were always ground with piñons for bread and cake making. The most favored way in recent years is one used by the Navajos. Roasted nuts are ground, hull and all, on a *metate*, a tiny amount of sugar added and nothing else. When cooked it makes a sweet, dark brown cake. By adding a little corn gruel, it becomes a thick pudding.

Before grinding into flour the piñons are washed two or three times to remove the last speck of rusty-brown dust from the hulls. They may or may not then be boiled. In either case the nuts are roasted, not parched. Parching leaves charred hulls, some burned black, despite all possible care in stirring them. This charring gives the nut meat a bitterish taste. Roasting makes the hulls very brittle by removing gum and oil and improves the flavor.

THE ROASTED NUTS are handled on the *metate* exactly the way corn is ground into flour. First, they are roughly cracked and broken up, hulls and kernels. A second grinding turns them into a very fine flour. It may also be a somewhat tricky mess, depending on how much of the oil is retained in the white nut meat. The flour is then allowed to dry and natural evaporation of more oil leaves it crusty. A third grinding follows after which it is ready for use.

Most often it is sweetened with sugar or syrup, placed in a pan and baked over a bed of coals or merely set next to a slow fire. The hot cake is kept just under the temperature where the remaining oil would fry away. If that year's crop of piñons is used the oil gives the food a tastier flavor. The cake cooks within a few minutes and is removed

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from the heat and allowed to cool. It can be cut into squares with a knife but it also breaks easily into chunks. Children around the Indian home are likely to be nibbling on them throughout the day. The green nuts are eaten sparingly, however, as over-indulgence produces several forms of intestinal upsets.

Piñon nut mush is somewhat like corn meal mush in appearance. The nuts are hulled and broken into coarse chunks, not ground. They are placed in a vessel, usually of pottery, and boiled close to the firebed. The mush is eaten directly from the container with the fingers or with a spoon. It can also be drained and allowed to set, then fried like scrapple. When fried with mutton grease in large flat pieces (the way most Indian flour bread is cooked), it becomes a kind of waffle. It can be folded together and is usually handled in that manner while still pliable from heat. When dried out, pieces can be broken off and are of light weight.

The shelled nuts made into cake are soggy heavy. This is another reason why the shells are ground with the flour. Various ingredients may be added—flour, corn meal or grass seeds. The latter are often ground with the nuts for, as the old people say, "A few wild grass seeds make the bread stronger. When they ate grass seed flour in the old days Indians were tall and robust."

After a year's storage the nuts start acquiring a strong taste. After two years they become very oily and rancid. But even when no longer marketable, they can still be used as food. Boiling removes most of the objectionable features. Parching or roasting will also help. If not used within a reasonable length of time, the nut meat becomes brittle and crumbles easily. In this condition they lose weight and harden into a small kernel loose in the shell.

A special kind of confection-delicacy is made with the flat leaf of the several *mescal* cacti. It is started baking in a pit the same as *mescal* is cooked. When the syrup begins bubbling out, on this flat leaf are spread piñon nuts mixed with the small fruit of the cliff rose. Leaves are replaced in layers in the pit and the cooking completed.

The small pinkish red cliff rose fruit gives the food a sweetish-sour taste, and the nut with its oil cuts the cactus' sharp taste. Havasupai Indians of the remote Grand Canyon country are especially adept in preparing this confection, and trade it to other Indians. The western Navajos have long gone there to barter for it.

ALL TRIBESMEN ASSERT that the piñon is "stout," as their words describe it. Certainly a handful of them will assuage hunger quickly. To bolster other foods the old Ute Indians added whole shelled nuts to cut-up game, making a stew. Other Indians added them to any kind of chopped meat, especially if it were lean and stringy, to provide "grease." In the spring of the year most Indian domestic animals are not fat.

For making cookies, or cup-size cakes, piñon flour is prepared in the same way as for puddings and heavy cakes. In this form it may be dropped into muffin pans. More often it is cooked the old way, by small gobs of batter dropped on a very hot surface. Again, if of heavy consistency, the cookies are first shaped into oblong slugs and placed on the cooking plate.

A story among the Navajos relates how, when the white man's packaged oatmeal was introduced among them, a woman whose piñon cookie batter was too fluid, rolled the cookies in oatmeal. To her surprise the finished product had a special flavor. These were not by any means "oatmeal" cookies, for the outside grain dropped off in handling. But from this experience rolled barley was experimented with in the same way. Today both oatmeal and barley are sometimes mixed with the cookie dough, a tablespoon to a pint of nut flour.

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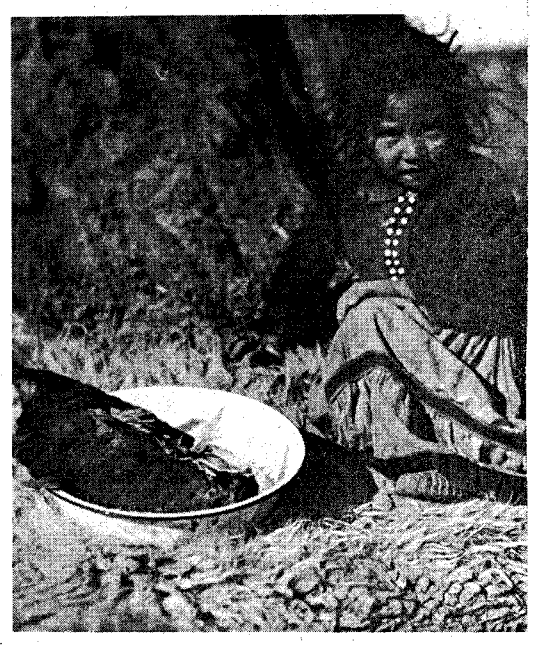
Piñon nut bread, fried and folded.



Right, no bigger than a piñon nut herself, this little girl is about to eat some of the nut pudding.

Indians gathering piñons from ground debris in the old way.

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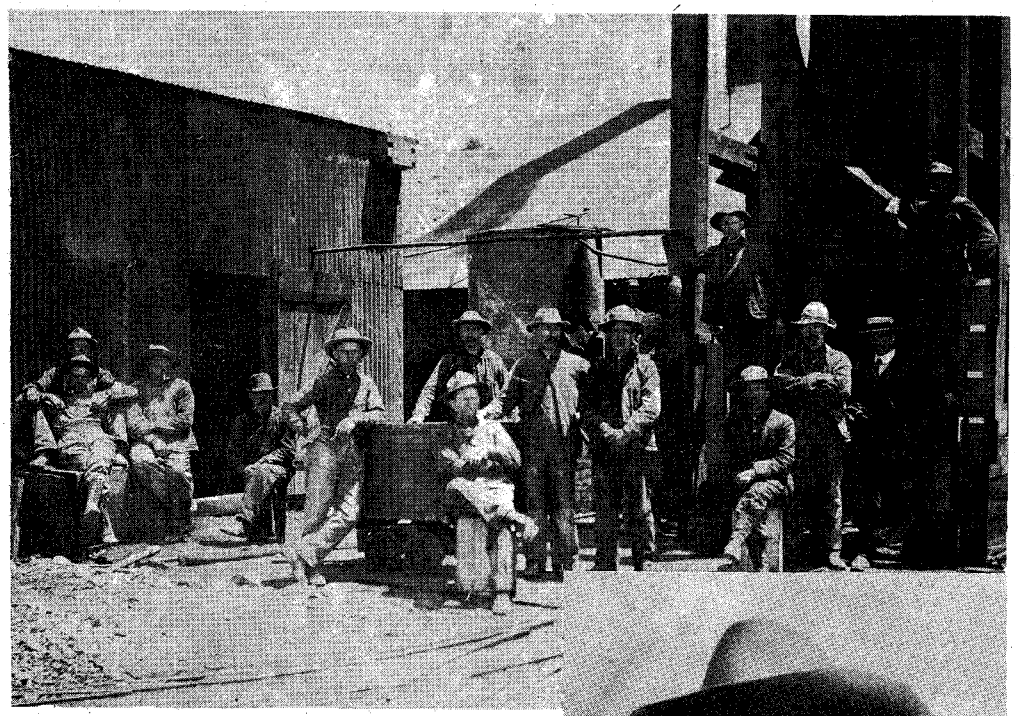
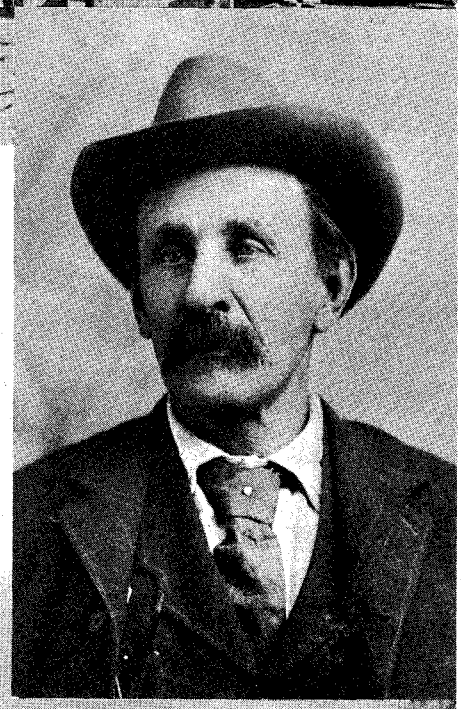
The Muleskinner Millionaire





Above, the Strong Mine early in 1893. Man in white collar and straw hat is Sam Strong.

Right, Bob Womack, discoverer of "the World's Greatest Gold Camp." He died broke!

Below, Victor, Colorado, "City of Mines," in 1900, after being rebuilt in brick after the disastrous fire of 1899. The building with the smokestack is the shafthouse of the Gold Coin Mine, discovered while excavating for the basement of an elegant hotel. The shafthouse had stained glass windows. One hoist man quit because, he said, "You can't swear in this place . . . it's too much like a church."

By RUFUS L. PORTER

Photos Courtesy Author

ALL THE great gold camps of the world have been discovered by prospectors who knew gold when they saw it and how to locate it. Bob Womack was such a man, but it took him nine years of intermittent prospecting and three years of devoting his entire time to it, to locate the first vein of ore in his "Poverty Gulch."

The "crazy cowpoke" (cowpunching being his vocation and prospecting his avocation) had by his discovery sparked the greatest gold rush in all history. The Cripple Creek mining district, with its twelve or thirteen towns besides two cities, Cripple Creek and Victor, literally became "The World's Greatest Gold Camp," with 480 producing mines. Its six square miles have produced $826 million in gold—1,000 tons.

Womack made his discovery on October 12, 1890. The boom started the following spring but following the usual pattern of gold camps the world over, some of the biggest fortunes were made by rank tenderfeet who didn't know a thing about gold, prospecting or mining. Sam Strong was one of these.

He was shrewd enough to follow a veteran prospector, Winfield Scott Stratton, the new district's first millionaire, over to the east end of the district and to stake his claim as close as he could to Stratton's fabulous Independence, staked July 4, 1891 and sold in 1899 for $11 million.

A native of Missouri, Strong's trade had been that of a muleskinner, although he had usually bossed gangs of skinners on construction jobs. He was hauling lumber in Colorado Springs when he decided to follow Stratton to the new gold camp, only seven miles as the crow flies from the summit of Pikes Peak—the gold which wasn't found during the "Pikes Peak or Bust" rush of 1858-1860.

Strong was accompanied by two other Springs men—a lather, J. R. McKinnie and a grocer named Bill Gowdy. Both Strong and McKinnie became millionaires within the next few years. Incidentally, most of the more than fifty millionaires the Cripple Creek district made in the first ten years were tradesmen, businessmen and professional men such as Pharmacist Jones. Jones merely tossed his derby in the air, dug where it landed and located one of the richest mines in camp. Most of these men were from Colorado Springs and when they took their millions back home the town boomed from 12,000 population to 33,000 within a few years.

After Strong was established on the east end of the mining district (the Strong mine is located within the Victor city limits) several of his muleskinning

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Moral: Never risk trying to settle a gambling debt at ten cents on the dollar!

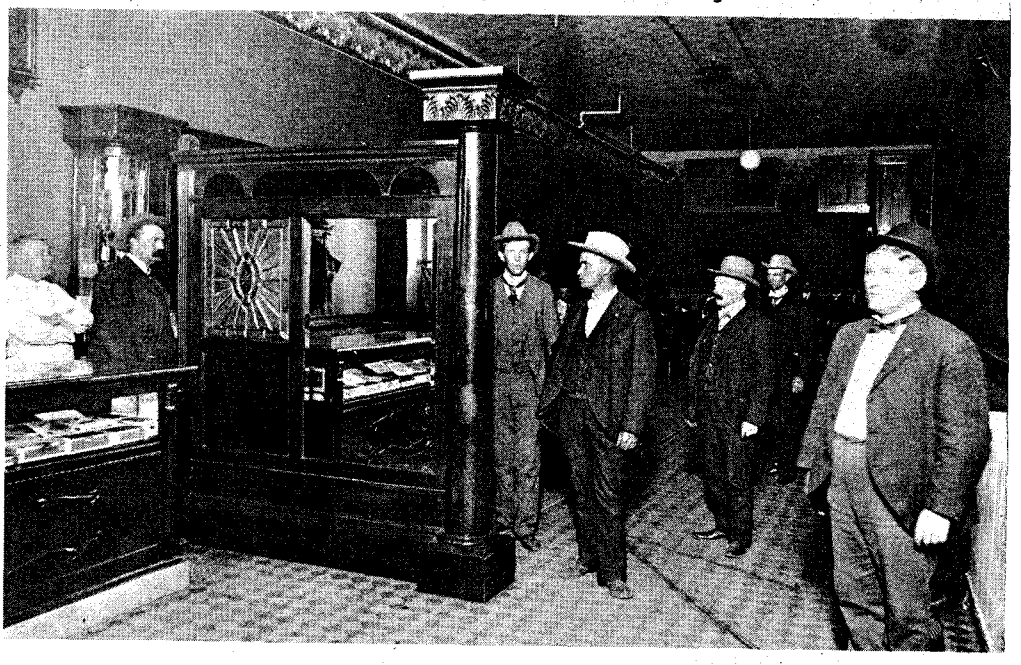
buddies came out from Missouri and set up a camp near a spring, the source of Wilson Creek which runs south of Victor. It was called "Strong's Camp" and was located in the gulch between Big Bull Hill and Battle Mountain, at the foot of which is the Strong Mine.

Strong's Camp was the first settlement in the east end of the district. There were no saloons or other businesses, just a group of crude shacks in which the prospectors batched. For entertainment and booze and the other necessities of life, the men rode horseback or drove buckboards over to Cripple Creek, six miles to the west. They were a rough and tough bunch and often got into free-for-alls in the gambling joints, honky-tonks and cribs down on Myers Avenue, "The World's Greatest Red Light District."

SAM STRONG rubbed his lucky buckeye one spring morning in 1892 and went over to dig another hole on his claim which up to then had proved valueless. But this day, thanks to his buckeye, which was the symbol of good luck in the "Show Me" state, he struck a very rich vein of ore. And the first thing he did, after making a couple of good shipments,

(Continued on page 65)

Grant Crumley, owner of the Newport Saloon, is behind the bar with hat on. John Neville, Strong's father-in-law, is second from left in front of bar. He tried to act as peacemaker between Strong and Crumley. Strong stands directly behind Neville. This photo was taken a few nights before the shooting.



Sam Strong lies dead on the floor of the Newport Saloon after being shot by Grant Crumley at close range with a sawed-off shotgun.

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Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 33)

handling the steering wheel, the other was taking care of the gas, gearshift and brakes, and they were not wasting any time on the road.

Over in the pasture, I found John's tribe scattered like a bunch of Spanish goats in a peach orchard. Two of the biggest girls were spotting the best post timber and taking care of any underbrush in the way. Five or six licks from John's four-pound Kelley felled the tree, and by the time it hit the ground John's wife or one of the big boys was on it, trimming and cutting off the top. Then two of the little ones would grab the post by its end and go kiting it out where the Ford was being loaded. Had there been a squirrel in a cedar tree that day, he would have gotten a ride to the cedar yard before he could quit the tree.

When John sees me he says, "I'm choppin' 'em down an' puttin' 'm in the the yard, ain't I?" And the next time I saw Honest John in town, he was a-blowin': "Cut more'n twenty dollars worth a cedar in less'n half a day—all by myself an' not half tryin'."

ALWAYS was a cur dog man myself. When I hear my dog bark I want to be "here 'tis," and have him on a limb when I get there. Hound music is pretty all right, but it usually don't put any meat on the table. Got no truck with a pack of dogs who will yodel "yonder he goes" all night long and come in the next morning whining "he got away." Guess that's why me and one of my second cousins can't see eye-to-eye, for he's a hounddog man from way back when.

About forty years ago, I was sitting on the side of Joe Wimberley Hill when down the trail comes a jackrabbit, coasting along on three feet with one ear cocked down and looking back over his shoulder with one eye to see if he needs to shift over into four-footed full-speed ahead. Then, here come my cousin's Walker foxhounds, a-burnin' the breeze an' makin' all kinds of tenor music. Carrying bass and bringing up the rear was his Kentucky-bred black and tan imported coonhound. Hightailin' it off that hill, I jump this second cousin of mine about what I had just seen his fine fox hounds a-doin'. He looks down his nose at me and says, "You set right there in broad open daylight an' let that fox get by without seein' him, but you did see the smartest jackrabbit in these parts. That rabbit knows my dogs wouldn't bother him, an' he also knows while he's running along with my dogs there's not a fox or coyote in Texas that's goin' to bother him, either."

Ought to known better than to jump him because he had straightened me out about his hounds four or five years earlier. That time, he and I and my Daddy were camped under the big pecan tree on the other side of Cypress Creek, just below old Dripping Springs crossing. This country was about all in cedar brakes then, and Phylos' place down the creek was the only house between there and Blue Hole.

About nine o'clock the first night out, we were busy setting throw-lines along the creek while over towards Joe's Hill, my cousin's hounds were tuning up for a race. Then all of a sudden a couple of them dogs yelped like they had run onto a rattlesnake and everything got quiet. We stood listening and here comes them hounds a-bustin' the brush. They swam the creek and gathered around underfoot, whimpering like they were scared half to death. About that time a panther screamed over across the creek and we set out for camp in high.

Nearly every other step, somebody fell over a hound, and the lantern went out, but we made it to camp in nothing flat anyway. Daddy got his old shotgun out and we built up a big fire and sat there with them durn hounds underfoot. Once in a while one of 'em would walk to the edge of the dark with his hair all bristled up and growl low-like, then come back and try to crawl into somebody's lap. Nothing else happened. Finally I say to myself out loud, "If them hounds were any account, they'd be out there a-puttin' that cat up a tree."

Second Cousin snaps back, "Wasn't for these dogs bein' right here, that panther would of already been in here and tore this place all to pieces."

—Excerpted from *The Wimberley Hills: A Pioneer Heritage*, by C. W. Wimberley, published by Von Boeckmann-Jones, Austin, Texas.

Hermit of the Middle Fork

(Continued from page 27)

removed from his feet since they were first put on.

The mountain abounded in wild game and he killed a deer whenever he needed meat. Every fall he would kill a fat bear and that would furnish fat for the winter. He made a trip to the outside twice a year, and had very few visitors. Just to be sure no one bothered his cabin while he was away on a trip he had made a small sign and posted it over the unlocked door. It read:

Everything in this cabin is poison

The hermit was a medium-sized man, very muscular, clean shaven and appeared to be about seventy years old. His cabin of logs was ten feet square, with a four-foot square bed in one corner. There was one broken chair on which sat a washpan containing a cake of soap with a quarter-inch of dust over both. It had never been used, as the creek was nearby.

He told us that in the summer he cut enough firewood from dead pines in the vicinity to last all winter. He said he slept about twenty-two hours every day in winter and ate one meal a day. He practically hibernated during the cold weather.

For tools he had an axe and a crosscut saw. We saw nothing else although he may have had a few others hidden away. Since it was about the first of May his garden was in its prime and apparently large enough to support a good-sized family. The cabin seemed too small to contain all the dried vegetables he said he stored for winter. We saw no glass jars and he apparently canned nothing. He had no fruit trees since the climate was too cold to guarantee a crop.

He told us his name was Earl Parrot, and I believe he came originally from Iowa. He had been back home but once since he left for the Klondike in 1898 and had no contact with his family, if any members were left. He had no radio and took no newspaper, so he was completely uninformed and apparently indifferent to what was happening in the world. When we asked him if he knew who was President, he replied he guessed it was Roosevelt (meaning Theodore). It made no difference to him. He owned nothing to tax and had never bothered to homestead the land he occupied.

I have been told that a few years later the hermit became sick and was taken to a hospital by one of his few trapper friends, but I have no details.

As we continued our voyage down the Middle Fork we almost envied the old hermit and his complete isolation from the crazy world. I have not been back since and do not know if anyone else ever used his cabin. If anyone knows I would like to hear.

Third Rate Henchman

(Continued from page 29)

brand him as one who would attach himself to an organization which was already breaking up and being hunted down like wild beasts. Things in New Mexico had not been going too good for the gang, but in southern Colorado there were sheep bands for the taking. And so Lucero was outfitted by Vicente Silva to go to the Colorado territory, since Lucero knew the country there and felt that one good job would bring in a handsome profit for himself and the boss.

Near Alamosa he found what he was looking for without getting into much trouble. It was only necessary for him to separate the number of animals he wanted from a band of sheep and drive them away. In Alamosa, too, he found a wife. She was very young, very small, and pretty. She was the kind who would not ask many questions, and with the simplicity of a fifteen-year-old never having had any schooling, the poor girl got ready to ride with her husband to Las Vegas, where he told her he was driving the sheep he was "buying."

In Las Vegas she was to find a nice three-room home, with gable roof that would keep out the rain, a wooden floor in each room—the kitchen, living room and bedroom. There would be a fence around the property, with trees and flowers in the front yard, with chickens to lay eggs, and goats to give milk in the backyard. There would be flour, lard, bacon, beans, corn and many other things to eat stacked in the cupboards of the kitchen. In Las Vegas the merchants had pretty things for the ladies to wear and she would have her modest share of these. To Amadita Chavez the promises sounded like a happy departure from the drudgery of her father's house in Alamosa, where all women were wives or daughters of ranch hands and cowhands, sheepherders and campmen, and lived the life best known as "hell on horses and women."

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With the money that Cecilio would get from the sheep that she thought were legally his and would sell at a profit in New Mexico, her life could not help but be brighter than before.

With all this to look forward to, the young girl endured the horseback ride from Alamosa to Las Vegas, the dodging over little-known trails that her husband explained were necessary to graze the animals. The stolen sheep were sold shortly after crossing the Colorado-New Mexico border, after which the journey became easier.

IT WAS early spring of 1892 when Cecilio Lucero and his wife rode into Las Vegas, and his first act was to report to the captain, Don Vicente Silva.

"You brought a wife, eh?" questioned the chief from his young henchman.

"A pretty one and very young, Don Vicente."

"What else did you bring? Money, that is."

"A little. I did not get much for the sheep as I had to sell them cheap or not at all. Had to buy a horse and saddle for my wife, too."

Cecilio pulled out a red bandana which held the money he brought in—$114.

"Pretty poor showing for two months' work," sneered the boss. "How did you go about the job?"

"I tricked a boy who was herding a small band of sheep into believing that his mother was dying in Alamosa and that I had been sent down to take care of the sheep while he rode home to see her. As soon as he left, I drove the sheep to where my wife was waiting and we came on into New Mexico. I told her I had bought the sheep."

"Why didn't you trick someone who was herding a large band?"

"I tried but they were too wise."

"The wise ones should have been shot, Mr. Lucero. You took more risk in stealing a few sheep and letting the herder live to help track you down than if you had shot him so he could not give the alarm. It is lucky that you were not caught. Here was an opportunity for you to have made a real haul and you bungled it. We are not petty thieves, Mr. Lucero. I want it understood that the next time you go alone or with any member of our organization to do a job you will let nothing stop you from making the most of it."

Lucero left Silva at the latter's hideout in Las Vegas with his chief's words burning in his ears. Silva had called him "Mister" and that carried a threat. Although Silva owned the Imperial Saloon in Las Vegas, he was a fugitive from the law and ventured to his place of business only with the strictest secrecy. His brother-in-law, Gabriel Sandoval, ran the saloon. Silva allowed Lucero to retain one hundred dollars of the loot, and kept fourteen dollars and the horse and saddle which Lucero had bought to transport his wife to Las Vegas.

The young wife was left in the home of a friendly woman named Luz. The beautiful house which Cecilio had promised her was only an enticement the bandit had used to win her. The three-room home was only a dream; the fact

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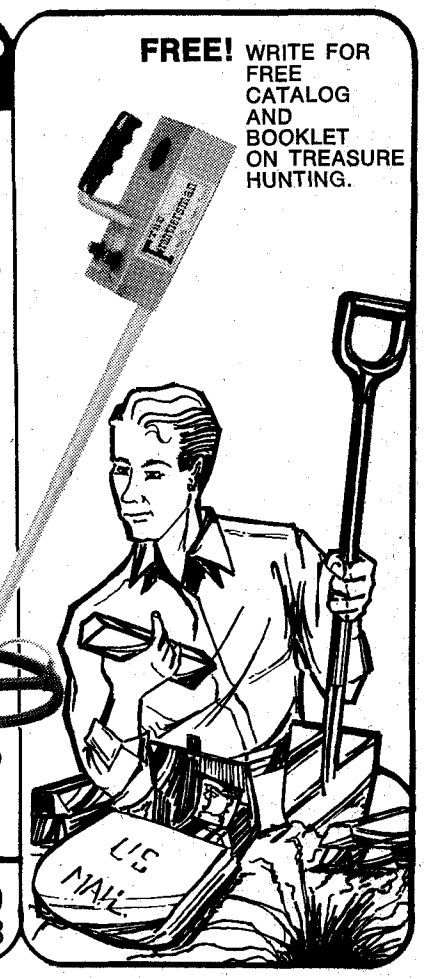

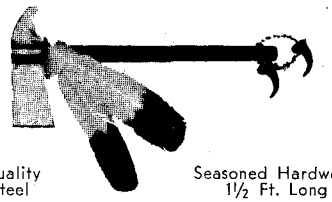

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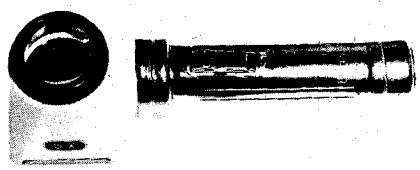

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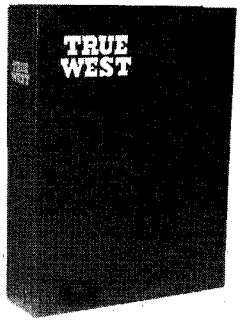

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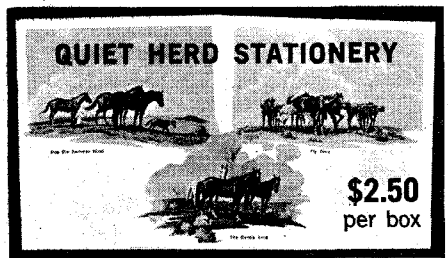

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was that it was necessary to search for a house to rent the next day. One was found at the outskirts of Old Town, near the hills which slope gently upward to the woodlands westward from Las Vegas. The house was a one-room adobe affair, with a flat roof and dirt floor, one window in the back and a door in front. There was no fence surrounding the property, which was barren of any vegetation except weeds. All this the new bride could bear, as she was used to poverty, but the truth of her husband's occupation was now cruelly revealed to her. She had, however, married this man in the Church for better or for worse.

WITH HIS hundred dollars, Cecilio went in search of furnishings for his new home. He bought a stove, a table, some bedding but no bed, a couple of chairs (all second-hand) and was given some wooden boxes at the store where he bought groceries in which to store food. He had several tools and cooking utensils, feed for his horse and riding equipment. After the purchases were made, he had fifty dollars left to live on until the next job.

Spring rains caused some leakage in the house, and summer heat brought about some more discomforts, but the lot of the poor people in Las Vegas was very much the same as Cecilio's wife had been accustomed to in Alamosa. Before the winter was over a baby girl was born to the couple. Amadita Lucero was attended by a midwife who brought the baby into the world in first-class shape for a fee of one dollar. Another dollar was spent on a little party when the baby was baptized. Luz and her husband bought their god-child a complete baptismal outfit and brought wine for the party.

Activity on the part of the Silva gang had now dwindled to boredom, and Lucero himself had not taken part in any of the gang's doings since having returned from Colorado. He was living a drab life but ostensibly honorable, picking up an odd job here and there. Up to this time the Las Vegas police had been quite cooperative with the Silva gang, which had been the chief reason for its long period of success, but as public opinion rose against the depredations committed by the gang and with several of its members having been caught, convicted and executed or sent to prison, its complete extinction seemed imminent.

Lucero had a cousin who had a sheep camp near Vegoso. With a wife and baby to support he appealed to his relative to let him have part of his cousin's house in Las Vegas to live in and to let him work in the sheep camp. While suspected of connection with the Silva outfit, Lucero still had not been specifically charged with any crime, but his actions were being watched by the law-enforcement authorities. Under such circumstances, Benigno Martinez took the long chance of reforming his cousin, which turned out to be the worst error he had ever committed in his life.

The pronouncement of Vicente Silva that he had bungled the stock-stealing venture in Colorado preyed on the mind of young Cecilio Lucero. He resolved that he would do something which would arouse the admiration of the captain and all the members of the gang. He was only awaiting his chance to commit the most daring crime of all! If not with help, single-handed!

HAVING free access to his cousin's camp, it was easy for Lucero to take part of the 1,500 sheep Martinez owned and drive them to Watrous where he made a quick sale of them at a bargain, explaining to the buyer that because of the drouth the grazing was bad around Vegoso and the owner wanted them sold. The sheep were missed right away, but Cecilio returned to the camp, fully determined what his course of action would be. If Benigno made any fuss about it, he would kill him.

When Martinez took his cousin to task for stealing the sheep the argument did not last long. It was stopped by a bullet into the heart of the sheep owner and another into the head of one of his herders who was unfortunate enough to be present at the time of the confrontation.

An ordinary killer would have made haste to get away from the scene of the crime—but not Cecilio Lucero. He was out to make a name for himself—to show the gang, the people of Las Vegas, and particularly Vicente Silva, the kind of outlaw Lucero was. Nothing small-time this time. Se he went about with meticulous care, preparing a setting to dramatize his performance. With rope he made a harness for each burro of the two he would use to drag the bodies of his victims over the prairies, tying the dead men's bodies to the ends of the ropes. He then fashioned some noise-makers by stringing tin cans with wire, attaching them to the burros' tails. These would stir the animals to frantic action. Lucero then took stones and beat the dead men's heads leaving the bloody stones in sight so that the sheriff and his men would see his work. When the burros were run out of the corral at a gallop, Lucero felt satisfied. He would now go in search of Silva and the gang to tell them the good news. The day was Tuesday, May 23, 1893. What Cecilio Lucero did not know was that Vicente Silva had been shot to death by one of his own gang just five days before, on May 18.

TREASON was one thing which Vicente Silva would not tolerate. When a man joined his gang, he was sworn to strict loyalty and to secrecy about the gang's movements. For violating this rule, several men had paid with their lives. Treason was not even tolerated when the wife of Vicente Silva was suspected of having divulged some of the gang's activities, even though she, like all the of the innocent wives of the bandits, was never a member of the organization and thus had the immunity of one who had never taken oath. But she was suspected and Silva would not permit the extenuation of their relationship to interfere with the fast, hard rule of death to traitors. And so it was that the woman who had stood by him, through love of this infamous man, was lured to his hideout in Los Alamos, ten miles northeast of Las Vegas, and there stabbed to death. Four men were with Silva the night of May

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18, 1893. They were ordered out of the room where the bandit chief remained with his wife. Through the keyhole one of them saw what has happening, and all of them heard the agitated screams of the woman as she pleaded for her life. While kneeling, begging for mercy, Silva plunged a knife into her breast.

These four men whose hearts were devoid of common conscience had stuck by their chief through countless crimes, enduring privation, cursed by the families of their victims, despised by society, disgracing their wives and children and leaving them in want. But now the spectacle of the woman who had died by her husband's hand while protesting innocence of treason and swearing her love and loyalty to him created revulsion that even their low level of morality could not tolerate. This revulsion was intensified by witnessing the self-satisfied air of their leader who directed a funeral march to an arroyo, two miles from the house, where her body was dumped and covered by the crumbling dirt from the banks of the gully.

This grim mission accomplished they had walked a few steps when one of them, Jose Antonio Valdez, cocked his forty-five and blasted a bullet into the temple of Don Vicente Silva. His body was placed alongside that of his wife, and the spoils he carried in his person, consisting of more than $10,000 in cash and as much in jewels, were divided equally among the four felons who had been his followers and his assassins. Each man chose a different point of the compass toward which to travel, and parted company.

THE NEWS of the murder of sheepman Benigno Martinez and sheepherder Juan Gallegos spread rapidly. By nightfall of May 24, the crime was the talk of Las Vegas, and newspapers all over the state carried telegraphic reports of the blood-curdling occurrence. It was as Cecilio had planned. Such an event could not help but attract the attention of the public and, in particular, Vicente Silva. Now the chief would recognize who the big-shot was in the gang; in the sick mind of the murderer, this drama in which he had played the star role would vindicate him in the eyes of Silva for his poor performance in Colorado.

From the camp near Vegoso, Cecilio Lucero galloped his horse to one of the possible hideouts of the bandit chief, the home of Silva's mistress, Flor de la Peña, in Las Vegas. Flor herself had been trying without success to locate the chief, ignorant of the fact that Silva was already dead, his grave known only to the four who had buried him.

Lucero then hurried to Los Alamos, but there again failed to find either Silva or any of his henchmen. There was still another hideout, the Monte Largo Ranch just inside neighboring Santa Fe County, but his horse had given out so Lucero went home. Had Lucero shot the two men and then gone his way, suspicion toward him might have been lessened; but in handling the bodies for the sadistic display, his shirt, pants, hat, and even his underclothes became saturated with their blood. Thus he wrote the text for his own conviction with the blood of the two men he had killed. His association with Silva completed the web of suspicion which was circling around him. But all the explanation he gave his wife was that he had butchered a steer; then he went to bed.

Lucero hung around town that day and the next hoping to meet up with Vicente Silva, but antagonism toward him was mounting by the minute by the second day, and as the heat began to hurt he took flight. A man-hunt to capture him got immediately underway. Sheriff Lopez and a party took off toward Los Alamos where he was most likely to be found; Deputy Andres Sena and his party went west to the nearby mountains; another party covered the region toward Vegoso, east of Las Vegas.

MANUEL LUCERO, Cecilio's father, had a place in a canyon some seven miles north of Las Vegas. He and another son were there the afternoon of May 27. Presently they saw Cecilio walking toward the house. Haggard and hungry, his face showed the strain of a tortured mind, but he had a plan. With the help of his father, he would go to Taos County where he had grown up, or possibly into Colorado where he would lose himself to society and thereby save his life.

The bloody clothing which his son had discarded and other information Manuel Lucero had, were enough to convince him of Cecilio's guilt; his son's desire to run away confirmed his conviction.

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Not often is a man faced with such a burden as was now thrust on Manuel Lucero. He could help his son attempt an escape, or he could surrender him and take a long chance with a jury that could be no less than prejudiced. This was an acid test and Manuel Lucero passed it.

Just before midnight of May 27 a wagon rolled into the jail yard at Las Vegas. In it were Manuel Lucero and Cecilio Lucero, the latter with his hands tied behind his back. By morning the town knew that the wanted man was inside a cell. And a heartbroken father started out to find an attorney to defend his son in court. No one in Las Vegas would touch the case but in Raton, William C. Wrigley upon receipt of Manuel Lucero's urgent telegram agreed to defend the accused killer.

A preliminary hearing was set up in the office of Judge Wooster the afternoon of May 28. People from everywhere flocked to the hearing, so that before it began the office was crowded, with hundreds clamoring outside to enter. The proceedings, therefore, were moved to out-of-doors. District Attorney J. L. Ford represented the Territory and charged Cecilio Lucero with the murder of Benigno Martinez and Juan Gallegos. Although evidence against Lucero was overwhelming, no one had seen him commit the killing and, consequently, such evidence was circumstantial.

Legal manuevering could save this man from hanging and even—through the no-eye-witness technicality—bring about his acquittal. To the majority of men that meant only a miscarriage of justice, and they were in no mood to swallow it. When Lucero, on advice of his lawyer, pleaded "Not guilty," the crowd moved as one man for him, and it was evident that the proceedings could not continue but would have to be postponed until another day.

THE projected continuance of the hearing never took place. Tension was too high; men gathered in groups about town, some silent, others talking, but with one common goal in mind. A patient populace had become impatient with the atrocities of Silva's gang, which was now on the run, and was determined that this latest crime would not give it new birth. At about nine o'clock, the evening of May 29, an estimated throng of a thousand men stormed the county jail and with pistols in hand the leaders forced entrance into Lucero's cell and hustled him into the street.

He wilted like a mowed weed, shouting his innocence, but these men had come to do a job and no pleading from the prisoner could hold them back. A rope was placed around his neck and he was led down Bridge Street and across the Gallinas River, thence to Douglass Avenue, where a suitable telegraph pole was selected for the hanging. The end of the rope was thrown over the cross-arm of the pole; as he struggled desperately he was hoisted upward, his legs dangling, while he tried to place one of his feet on a step of the pole. Halfway up he was able to accomplish this and the weight of his body was temporarily removed from his neck. Again the rope was pulled, which dislodged his foot from the step, and he dangled in the air again. Fully five minutes had passed and the doomed man was suffering an agony befitting the punishment due for his crime, but Lucero tenaciously clung to a flickering spark of life.

Ten minutes passed and someone shouted, "He's still alive!"

Another voice yelled, "Let him die twice; he killed two men!"

At 10:10 p.m., twenty minutes after first being pulled up, Lucero's body became limp and showed no further sign of life. A brutal justice had avenged a brutal crime, and there was no doubt in anybody's mind but that it was justified.

My mother was Amadita Chavez. After Cecilio Lucero's death she married my father, a kindly, illiterate sheepherder who worked for $15 to $20 a month and was away from home the majority of the time. Mother's struggle to keep my two sisters and me sheltered, fed and clothed, and in school was heroic, but she died of overwork in Las Vegas March 17, 1915. Amadita was THE woman in my life, whose short stay in this world was spent in self-sacrifice and sorrow.

Buck Garrett: Man and Legend

(Continued from page 25)

How or where he acquired them I have not been able to find out, but he possessed a great many uncut diamonds some of which he had made up into magnificent jewelry. His picture shows him wearing a diamond stickpin, very fashionable then, and a large diamond ring. Bud Ballew, who appears with him in the picture, is also wearing a diamond ring and stickpin. Men in those days were especially fond of diamonds, as were the women they bedecked with them. Perhaps people considered the precious stones a good investment; perhaps they liked to wear them as a visible sign of affluence. (In this respect, times haven't changed.)

When he was sheriff, Buck Garrett seems to have known many women both in an official capacity and an unofficial one. It was he who went to Old Mexico to bring back Clara Smith Hamon (she was not married to Jake Hamon but to a cousin by the same name), alleged killer of Jake Hamon, early-day oil tycoon. She had fled there after the shooting. It was said that Hamon had tired of her and tried to get rid of her and she shot him in revenge. At any rate it was Buck Garrett who brought her back to stand trial.

Possibly many of the stories about the sheriff's "friendships" were exaggerated as so often happens to a handsome man in public office. But there were at least two on which I was given pretty definite information but had to give my word not to reveal names. One of these women died young but his affair with the other

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went on for several years both during and after his tenure of office as sheriff. It was still going on, reportedly, at the time Buck had the stroke which preceded his terminal illness. He was living in Oklahoma City at the time he fell ill. Mrs. Garrett, from whom he had never been divorced as she often declared to friends that she "loved him and would never give him up," heard about the stroke. She hired an ambulance, went to Oklahoma City and brought him back to her home in Ardmore. Ma nursed him with tenderness and devotion until he died in 1929 at the age of fifty-four.

Mrs. Garrett followed him in death in 1958 and their only son, Raymond, died in 1965. All members of the Garrett family are buried in the Rose Hill Cemetery at Ardmore.

A newspaper man who lived in Ardmore at the time of the sheriff's death had this to say: "No sooner had the news of Buck Garrett's death been released than my phone began to ring—New York, Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco—even a cable from London. All wanting the same thing, a detailed story of this man and his career as a peace officer.

"This puzzled me. To me the man had never been that big. And yet, when I stood back and looked at him through the eyes of those who had only heard of him and had not known him personally, he was tremendously large. In this case this tree was, I guess, a lot bigger than the whole forest!"

Hated and loved, feared and admired, Buck Garrett is rapidly becoming a legend in the community he served for so many years. But the one thing which impressed me most as I talked to those who had known him best, was the often repeated phrase, "He was a good man. He did his best to keep the peace."

A Lousy Ending

(Continued from page 21)

lights of the six candles were snuffed out.

Mark Frost got slowly to his feet and went into the dark saloon. A kitchen match flared in his cupped hands as he examined the tallow candles in the beer bottle holders, and then came back to stand spread-legged in the light of the bonfire, shaking his head from side to side, his Stetson hat cocked at an angle.

"Seein' is believin'," he said, grinning faintly. "Nary a candle nicked. Nary a bottle busted. Only the candle wicks ain't there anymore. If any man tried to tell it like it happened, and I wasn't there as an eye-witness, I'd call him a damn liar."

Wallace laughed. "Old Tex's red eye had somethin' to do with it," he admitted.

Tex Alford said he still had a cigar box full of silver dollars, half dollars, quarters and dimes that had been thrown up in the air and hit by Wallace with a .22 target rifle, one time when he was at Rocky Point crossing cattle.

THE DONEY kids had long ago unsaddled the horses and fastened their forefeet with rawhide hobbles. They knew from past experience that their old man would stay here as long as the whiskey

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held out in the jug that was making the rounds. Hunting stories were swapped, tall tales told, while the blaze of the campfire died out to glowing red coals that began to ash over. The lopsided moon was high in the sky, and it was time to bed down. Daybreak came early. Wallace spread his tarp-covered roundup bed on the high ground of a cutbank at the river's edge, and I was dead to the world in a few seconds after I lay down.

Next morning at daybreak I went out with Tex Alford in his rowboat. While he handled the oars I pulled in the trot line that was securely fastened on each bank of the wide river, the hooks attached to short fish lines. It was my job to get the catfish off the hooks and deposit them in a wet gunnysack, then rebait each hook with chunks of raw beef liver. It required some skill not to get stuck by one of those needle-sharp whiskers that could sting like a porcupine quill. We brought in half a dozen catfish that would tip the scales at ten pounds each. Pan-fried in bacon grease they shore made a hearty breakfast.

The sun was rising over the ragged outline of the badlands when we rode away, Wallace, Gregory Doney, Antoine Gladeau and me, to measure the haystacks at the scattered ranches along the river. They were long, wide and level haystacks. The standard measurement consisted of the length and breadth of each end, and three times over at each end and one middle. All measurements of each stack at each line camp were marked down with indelible pencil in tally books, on separate pages, to be later handed over to Gregory Doney who would turn them over to the bookkeeper at the Circle C ranch to figure out the price per ton. It required two full days to get the job done and we wound up at Walter Fletcher's place at old Fort Musselshell where the post office, store and saloon were all housed in one large sod-roofed log cabin. Bill McGinnes, foreman for the UL ranch, located in the big bend of the river, had crossed with us on the ferry. Bill Mayberry showed up that evening with the news that his cattle were all rounded up and in his pasture, all set and ready to trail to the Circle C ranch. The previous day had been warm and sunny but according to Fletcher's almanac there was a storm predicted. He and Wallace agreed that we'd better get started early the next morning. That sure cut short our planned vacation to hunt Bighorn sheep in the badlands and grizzly bear in the wild plum grove.

That night after supper the men gathered in the saloon to do a little drinking, while I sat outside on a long log the length of the building that also served as a doorstep. The door was open and I had both ears cocked to hear Wallace tell it scary about Granville Stuart's Judith Basin Vigilantes, composed of cowpunchers from the DHS and other big outfits mostly south of the Missouri, including the Circle C which was then located on Flatwillow Creek in the Judith Basin. These big outfits were all members of the newly organized Montana Stockgrowers Association, and cowmen and the cowhands who worked for them were sworn to secrecy. Their object was to destroy the organized cattle rustlers and horse thief gangs who were getting out of hand throughout Montana Territory.

One of their meeting places was at the Fort Musselshell Crossing. The muleshoe bend in the Missouri where the UL ranch was located made an excellent holding ground for stolen horses—where a drifting cowhand traveling along the south side of the Missouri had to swim the river twice to get to the other side, so the saying went.

It was in 1884, according to Wallace, that Granville Stuart, organizer and head of the Judith Basin Vigilantes (more commonly known among the renegades as the Stranglers) got word that a large horse thief gang with about 300 head of stolen horses, was due to rendezvous at Fort Musselshell and swim the horses across. A tough renegade called Floppin' Bill, wolfer and trapper and one of the cattle rustler and horse thief gang, had turned informer and was keeping Stuart of the DHS outfit posted.

At a given date, supplied by Floppin' Bill who got his name from a crippled arm that flopped around, the Vigilantes under the command of Granville Stuart surrounded the cabin at night from all sides, commanding the renegades to throw away their guns and come out with their hands up. But instead they chose to shoot it out. Fifteen were shot down. Five escaped but later were captured and strung up to cottonwood trees along the banks of the river, their carcasses left hanging for the crows as a grim warning to all cattle rustlers and horse thieves. The crew and passengers on the river steamboats that traveled the Missouri from St. Louis to Fort Benton thronged the deck to view the hanged men. It was a grim story Wallace told twenty-five or more years after it happened, and even at that late date the names of the members of the Judith Basin Vigilantes were still kept secret.

I was sitting in the dark shadow of the old log building with Fletcher's several hound dogs. A faint breeze stirred the leaves of the old cottonwoods with a whispering sound. In by-gone days those trees had served their grim purpose as hangman's trees, and I could hear the muddy waters of the wide Missouri lapping at the sides of the flat-bottomed scow that served as a ferry to haul freight and roundup wagons across the river. The hushed murmurs of the water, according to Indian legend, told many dark secrets to the muddy banks, and the rustling of the leaves told their secrets of the old Outlaw Trail that extended from the Mexican border to the Canadian line.

I'd often heard that it was in the hollow trunks of lightning-struck trees, known as blind post offices, that outlaws on the dodge left folded pencilled notes for their outlaw friends. And in my kid's imagination those giant cottonwoods that had once served to hang men, outlined against the pale moonlight, made an eerie, ghost-like spectacle, as if the hanged men had come back from the dead to listen while my brother Wallace related their story, naming a few who had been cowhands turned outlaw, and telling how the 300 head of stolen horses

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had been recovered as they grazed in the pasture of the muleshoe bend that was now the UL ranch.

That memorable night at Fort Musselshell Crossing was never to be forgotten. I sat there listening in silence with sleeping hounds on all sides at my feet, dreaming dog dreams of chasing coyotes and wolves. The deep backwaters of the Fort Peck Dam now cover that historic place, the ghostly, sanguine ground where men met violent deaths and their bullet-riddled bodies were left hanging.

THE MAYBERRY cattle consisted of about 500 head. It was a mixed herd, with some cows with fall calves ready to wean in a month or so, and steers that ranged from yearlings to native four-year-olds ready to be shipped on the fall roundup. Mr. Mayberry had already sold everything but the bulls to his neighbors along the river.

It was getting daybreak when we began moving the herd from the pasture to let them string out along the old roundup trail, headed north for the Circle C. Bill Mayberry and Wallace Coburn rode the point. Old Man Alfred Peck and a cowpuncher called Dallas, who worked for Mayberry, rode the swing, while me'n Tom Mayberry, the oldest of the Mayberry boys, fetched up the drags. The pack horses that carried our beds and grub and served as night horses, were part of the drag end.

It was one of those chilly days with the threat of a storm in the offing, with the sun a pale white ball moving behind the overcast. It was long past noon when our little two-bit trail outfit reached the head of the brakes, and it was commencing to spit rain that soon turned into a cold sleet, then into snow, and there was no more sun. When we reached the old roundup camp on Bauchamp Creek where there was a sod-roofed log cabin, a small pole horse corral, and a couple of haystacks fenced in by barbwire it was midafternoon. We unpacked the horses and let the cattle scatter out to graze. While Old Peck cooked early supper the rest of us rode loose around the cattle, and the hobbled pack horses grazed along the creek.

I'd been cold since early morning, with only a black sateen shirt and threadbare Levi overalls and thin henskin drawers. My long yellow Fish Brand saddle slicker, carried all summer rolled up behind my saddle cantle, leaked along the folded places where the oiled rubber fabric had worn thin and was now stiffened until it crackled. My feet had been cold all day, and my old buckskin gloves were so wet I kept slapping my hands against my slicker-covered legs to restore the circulation. But I never let on to Tom Mayberry how frozen and miserable I was. I kept a sickly sort of grin on my face until it felt numb and set like a clown mask, and I envied Tom who had on winter underwear and angora chaps and a sheep-lined canvas coat under his saddle slicker.

Tom's father and Old Peck and the cowpuncher Dallas all wore chaps and warm coats and long winter underwear. Wallace had on his buckskin hunting shirt and winter underwear and blanket-lined canvas pants he used when hunting.

While we were riding day herd around the grazing cattle Wallace rode up from the opposite direction to meet me. I managed to maintain the frozen grin but it didn't fool my brother as he realized how cold I must be.

"Long George Baker," Wallace said off-hand, "is camped about a mile from here at an old trapper's cabin, with the hound pack. We might as well lope over to see how many coyote and wolf pelts he has tacked up to his cabin. We got time to make it there and back before supper."

Long George Baker was the Circle C wolfer, tough as a boot. A rawboned man who stood six feet six, somewhere in his fifties, with grizzled whiskers and long hair that always needed trimming. During the summer months he ran the hound pack, and a trap line during the winter. One of the old-time wolfers that were becoming a vanishing breed, he had worked for the Hudson's Bay Company and the American Fur Company in the old Whoop-Up country.

It was still spitting snow and the rolling prairie was covered with white. We traveled at a trot and it wasn't long until we sighted Baker's winter camp. There was no sign of Long George, his horse or the hound pack, so we put our horses in the barn and went over to the cabin. On the homemade pine plank door the wolfer had painted in large block print this grim warning:

THE LAST CAMP ROBBIN SON OF A BITCH WHO STOLE MY GRUB DIED OF STRICKNINE POISON.

Underneath the crudely painted words was a rough outline of a skull and crossbones.

WALLACE smiled faintly at the warning to camp robbers. "There's a story connected with that warning. I'll tell you about it later," he said as he yanked on the latchstring and pushed open the heavy door that squealed on rusty hinges. He stood there for a long moment peering inside the shadowy warmth of the cabin, motioning me to stay back. Then picking up a long-handled broom that was leaning against the inside wall, he stepped cautiously inside. From where I stood I could see a layer of dust as he swept the dirt floor.

Suddenly there came a loud metallic snapping sound, accompanied by the rattle of a chain that caused me to jump back a step. And there in the doorway stood Wallace holding aloft a big steel-jawed wolf trap attached to the worn straws of the old broom. The ten-foot length of chain was attached to one post of the built-in bunk that held Baker's roundup bed.

"Long George Baker," Wallace said grimly, "is a leetle bit locoed about camp robbers."

He lugged the broom and trap to a corner and motioned me to come in and close the door. Soon there was a good warm fire going, which brought out the strong stench of coyote and wolf pelts

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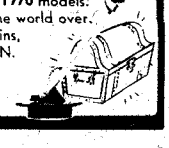

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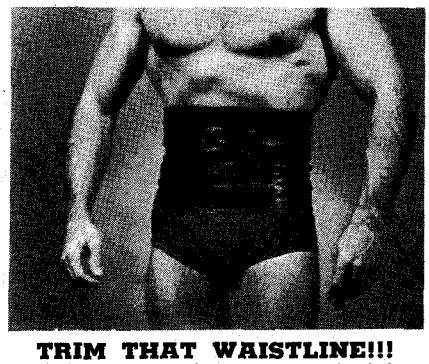

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that were tacked to all four inside walls. The coyote pelts consisted of a wide strip down the back, with the teeth of the upper jaw and the head and tail attached (which was necessary to reveal the true identity of the animal in order to claim the five dollar bounty). The hair side of the coyote strips were towards the wall, with the flesh side out, and coarse rock salt had been rubbed into the hide to cure it. The wolf hides, with both upper and lower jaws and heads attached, were tacked to one wall, the hides salted and tan-bark rubbed in. The hides were the pelts of gray prairie wolves, each worth $25.00. The reason why the whole wolf hides were necessary to collect a bounty was because in recent years a pack of wild dogs had been running with the prairie wolf pack and interbreeding. If the dog strain showed in the litter of pups the government refused to pay the bounty on the cross-bred pelts.

On a clothes line inside the cabin hung a faded blue flannel shirt, a pair of long wool sox, a long sleeved heavy wool undershirt and a pair of matching drawers, with the longest legs a feller ever wanted to see. Wallace took the undershirt from the line and held it in front of me.

"Just about the right fit," he said, "for a one-piece union suit for you. Peel down to the hide, pardner, while I do some fancy tailoring. But we better be long gone by the time that wolfer shows up with blood in his eye."

Wallace located a pair of shears, a harness needle and some coarse black thread, and made a big joke about being an expert underwear tailor. He had me shove both legs into the long sleeves, then he cut a hole for my head in the shirt tails and two arm holes. He whacked off the legs of the underdrawers and sewed them into the arm holes, and finished the job with a drop-seat.

While Wallace cut and stitched he told me the story Long George Baker had told him about putting powdered strychnine used for coyote bait, in a five pound sack of table salt—how some half-breed camp robbers in the Whoop-Up country had robbed his camp, stealing all the grub they could pack away, including the poisoned salt, and while neither of them had died they were mighty sick and puking up their insides when the wolfer, waiting until the sign was right, rode into their camp. Baker had laughed at their sorry plight and when they admitted the theft he took all their beaver plews and wolf hides and other valuable pelts and rode off, laughing fit to be tied.

A Dutch oven filled with mulligan stew was on the back of the camp stove. It smelled good when Wallace lifted the iron lid and forked the meat and vegetables around in the thick soup, but he shook his head and put the lid back on.

"Smells good," he said, "and might taste good if you feel a hankerin' for prairie dog stew, mebbe mixed with coyote and wolf meat. Like as not Baker cooked it for the dogs but I wouldn't put it past him to eat his share."

A feller never could tell whether or not Wallace was pulling your leg or meant what he said, but I was plumb willing to take his word for it.

Before we left, Wallace wrote a note to Baker, using brown wrapping paper and cartridge lead, and signed an order on the Circle C outfit for ten dollars to pay for the underwear. Then he planted the broom-sprung wolf trap where Baker had left it, and we headed for the barn. Wallace had sure got the job done on the union suit. It was so tight I had to take short steps when I walked, and he had to give me a leg up when I got aboard Snowflake. But I was warm as toast, and even if the coarse wool itched I had no kick coming. No kick coming at all.

IT WAS still spitting snow when we rode away from the cabin and I kept my eyes peeled for sight of Long George Baker because if he caught sight of two horsebackers leaving his camp he was most likely to cut down on us with the long barreled .30-40 rifle he packed. And he was a dead shot at any distance and wouldn't be shooting to miss. Any man whose notion of a practical joke was to set a wolf trap whose notched steel jaws could break a leg, or put strychnine coyote bait that could be fatal into a sack of table salt to punish camp robbers, was bound to be a little loco. I'd seen the wolfer a time or two when he had come to the ranch for grub and tobacco and had always been a little frightened of him. It was said George Baker was not his real name—that he had killed a few men, not counting Injuns—that he had ridden the Outlaw Trail and had done time in the pen. He was usually a quiet, brooding man of few words when sober, but drunk he was hell on wheels, a wild man from Borneo.

Anyhow, I was relieved when we'd left the wolfer's camp far behind and got back to where they were bedding the herd down on a level stretch of ground about a quarter of a mile from the cabin on Beauchamp Creek. The cattle had been watered and grazed, their paunches filled with bunch and buffalo grass. Leg-weary now from the dozen or more miles on the trail through the badlands, they were ready to lie quiet and chew their cuds. It was nearing twilight and, on account of the storm, dark came early.

This interval before first guard time was called "cocktail guard." For some unknown reason that had nothing whatever to do with the so-called cocktail hour when men and women were wont to gather in modern cocktail lounges in the big cities.

There were only six of us to stand night guard, riding slowly around the bedded herd, the outfit being short-handed. Wallace and Bill Mayberry had it figured out for three of us to stand guard until midnight, the other three from midnight to daybreak, using our pack horses for night horses. Wallace and Old Man Peck and me were to stand guard until midnight, so we rode to camp to eat supper and change horses. Old Man Peck had come up from Texas with one of the trail herds, was a good cowhand and easy to get along with, and a good roundup cook to boot. He soon had steaks in the frying pan, baking

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powder biscuits and pan-fried raw potatoes, and a gallon pot of coffee simmering on the stove. After wolfing our grub like we'd been starved for a week, we saddled our night horses and rode out to relieve Bill Mayberry and his son Tom and the cowpuncher Dallas.

Bill Mayberry handed Wallace the guard watch and remarked that it would take a cannon to get the bedded herd on their feet. He gave me a grin and said, "All you got to do, kid if you get heavy-lidded is to rub some Bull Durham on your eyeballs."

The three of us rode off slowly in opposite directions to relieve Old Man Peck and Tom. The raw wind that had been blowing all day had died out and it felt warmer even though it was still gently snowing. All the strong coffee and good grub I'd consumed would be enough to keep me wide awake without tobacco being rubbed in my eyes. The heavy wool underwear I was sewed up in was keeping me warm and I'd become accustomed to the itching.

My chunky brown gelding was Possum, the night horse I would have ridden on the roundup. There are some horses that see better at night than others, so I was told, and Possum was one of them. All I had to do was ride on a fairly slack rein and Possum would get the job done. He knew how to keep the proper distance from the bedded herd. I rode at the running walk Possum traveled on night guard and hummed a few songs to myself. My black silk neckerchief was tied up to cover my ears, and sewed up in the wolfer's underwear, with the snow falling gently on my face, I felt like I'd gained the full stature of an old cowhand riding the Chisholm Trail escorting 2,000 head of longhorns.

I met Wallace on the far side of the bedded herd but I didn't see him until he spoke. It is like the eyesight of horses; some men have better eyesight than others. Some are night blind, while a few have eyes that seem to penetrate the dark. My brother happened to be one of the chosen few, but he claimed that the gift of night sight was a matter of training—practice, combined with sense of direction and a certain feel for one's surroundings. A plainsman's sixth sense. Indians had that keen perception of all senses combined with animal instinct.

"We'll ride off a ways into that cut coulee along the creek and have a smoke," Wallace said. "That way the sudden flare of a match won't spook the cattle."

It was so dark I could barely make out the movement of my gloved hand in front of my face and the uncertain black shadow of Wallace and his horse a few feet away. Yet he knew the exact location of that coulee, and when he reined off I gave Possum his head and he trailed Wallace's horse.

While we rolled a smoke I asked Wallace if he could actually see the coulee in the pitch dark of the snowy night. He said he couldn't exactly see it but that he had located the coulee before dark. It was along Beauchamp Creek and easy enough to locate if a man cocked his ears to listen to the sound of the high water. It was as simple as that, and

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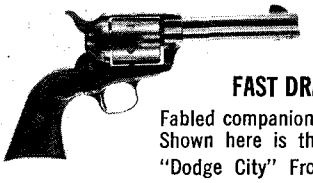

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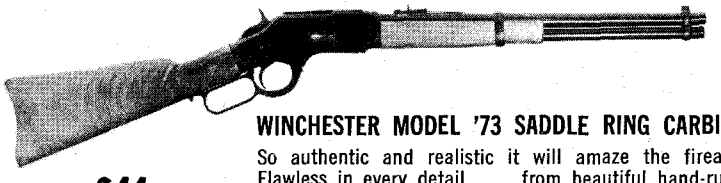

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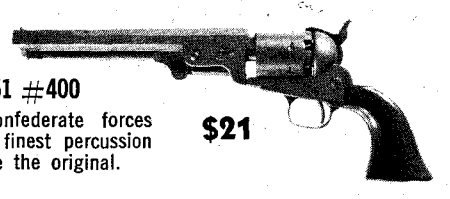

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I had learned another lesson to remember always.

OUR cigarettes lit, we headed back. I gave Possum his head and he took me right to the herd where we split up, each riding in opposite directions. A few minutes later I met Old Peck.

"A night like this," Old Peck said, "a cowhand wonders what the hell's become of his summer wages." There was a chuckle in his voice that made him sound young and reckless again. Alfred Peck owned a good ranch across the Missouri at the mouth of Devil's Creek in the badlands—owned a bunch of cattle in his own iron, and punched cows for top wages with every big outfit in that part of Montana. To a kid my age the white-whiskered, white-maned old cowhand was as old as Father Time, but I knew full well that he was young at heart and would stay that way, and I told myself that night if ever I got that old I hoped and prayed I would always stay as young as Old Man Alfred Peck.

When Wallace told me later it was getting along towards midnight by the guard watch I was still wide awake and willing to stand night guard until daybreak and I said so. But Old Man Peck was already headed for camp to wake Bill and Tom Mayberry and Dallas. Wallace said I needed my sleep even if I was wide awake and full of beans, so we parted company to ride once more around the herd. I was on the far side when Tom Mayberry rode up to relieve me.

"We got 'em, feller," Tom said. "Head for camp." And when he rode off and vanished into the snow-filled darkness I was on my own, and I found to my bewilderment I didn't know in what direction the cabin on Beauchamp Creek was located. I got a little panicky—panicky, bewildered and ashamed. All of a sudden I felt cold, and the wool underwear I was sewed up in felt itchy. Possum commenced walking with that running gait and I had no notion whether he was going once more around the herd or was headed for camp when I heard Wallace's voice, "Time we headed for camp, pardner." The voice of my guardian angel! "Just follow the sound of the creek."

It all came back quick enough now. The trail from the camp to where the herd was bedded followed Beauchamp Creek, and if I'd used the common sense God gave a young goose I'd have figured it out for myself. But Wallace knew I was lost and was giving me another lesson.

We unsaddled and tied up our horses and forked them hay, then headed for the cabin. The lids of the old sheet-iron camp stove gave off a red glow and the simmering coffee pot filled our nostrils with a delicious aroma. Old Peck had shed his boots and Levi overalls and crawled into bed, sitting up with his hat on, a cup of coffee in one hand, a half-smoked cigarette in the other. Bill Mayberry, Tom and Dallas had rolled up their beds and fastened them with bed ropes to make more room in the small cabin. We sat there in silence in the flickering candlelight, the only sound the muffled snoring of Old Peck who had pulled the blankets up over his head. We drank our hot coffee and felt its welcome warmth in our bellies, then we pulled off our boots and Levis and bedded down in our underwear and sox. I'd felt wide awake and full of beans out yonder as I rode night guard, but now, in spite of the strong black coffee, I was sound asleep as soon as my head hit my warsack pillow—even before Wallace blew out the candle.

Then somebody shook me awake. "Time to saddle up and get going. The herd got spooked and is stampedin'."

I got up in a hurry and headed for the door, excited and in a rush to saddle and get going. Then I heard Wallace's voice and felt his tight grip on my arm. "Take it easy, pardner. Where you headed for?"

I came alive, batting my eyes in the pitch dark, muttering something about the herd stampeding. The cabin was cold and Wallace led me back to where our bed was spread out on the floor. By then I was awake but the clarity of the dream still lingered at the back of my mind and I told Wallace that someone had told me to saddle up, so I got going as fast as I could.

"Not bothering to pull on your boots and get your hat," Wallace chuckled. "Good thing I overtook you before you stepped out in the snow. You were walking in your sleep. Now roll over and go back to sleep and change your dreams to something less strenuous."

This time I lay easy on the bedground until Wallace shook me awake. The stub candle was lit, and Old Peck was cooking breakfast.

IT WAS breaking day when we eased the cattle off the bedground. A foot or two of snow was on the ground and it was still snowing. This time the pack horses walked in the lead of the strung-out cattle so the horses could break trail in the snowdrifts. It was colder than it had been the day before, but there was no wind, no big soft snowflakes that melted when they fell, but fine-grained dry white powder,

Bill Mayberry and Wallace pointed the herd and kept the pack horses moving to break trail. Once the small drive of cattle got strung out and moving everything went along first rate, with me'n Tom fetching up the drags of cows and big calves. We had about fifteen miles to travel, slow miles on account of the snow, and if everything went along as it should we would make it to the Veseth place on Beaver Creek by late afternoon. The Circle C had recently bought the Veseth place, a sheep outfit about ten miles east of the home ranch.

That was destined to be one of the longest, coldest days I ever spent. Now and then when Tom Mayberry got chilled and his feet got cold he'd get off and walk to warm up, swinging his arms and stomping his feet. But sewed up as I was in Baker's underwear, with strips of torn-off slicker wrapped around my boots, it would be hard going, so the only time I got off my horse was to humor my coffee-filled bladder. Then in order to mount I had to hang onto the

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saddle strings. I got joshed by Tom who made ribald cracks about my leaky plumbing and my short legs. Tom was tall and long-legged, and good natured about his kidding, and I had to laugh along with him which helped a lot. I was bone cold and shivering and had to clamp my jaws to keep my teeth from chattering, and I knew Tom was chilled to the marrow, too, but neither of us whined about it.

It had quit snowing by now and when the low overcast lifted and spots of blue sky began to show, it was a good indication that the storm was over. About an hour before sundown the skies were clear, but there was little or no warmth to the sun when it finally made up its mind to shine, and its glaring reflection on the snow made us squint and get watery-eyed. Wallace went on ahead to open the wire gate that led into the Veseth pasture.

During that long cold, miserable day, my whole body felt itchy and I'd put in the day scratching the places I could reach, but the hell of it was I couldn't reach between by shoulder blades where it itched the most. Itching and scratching and chilled to the bone made the long, endless day wool-shirted hell. I'd heard tell of monks wearing horsehair shirts as penance for their sins, and they had nothing on me in that damned wolfer's underwear.

But the sight of the steers in the lead of that little drive as Wallace and Bill Mayberry began to tally the cattle through the gate made me plumb forget my troubles. This was the end of the trail. By some freak of nature the snowstorm had all but missed the Veseth place on Beaver Creek and the immediate surrounding country. A scant few inches of dry snow was all that had fallen in the cut coulees and long draws, while the wind had cleaned the ridges and side hills bare, to expose the autumn cured tall grass. As the cattle filtered through the gate they were left to scatter and graze, and the smell of water led them to the banks of Beaver Creek.

We watered our horses and headed for the log barn. While Old Peck got supper at the cook cabin we lugged our bedrolls into the nearby bunkhouse. There was no night guard to stand. Me'n Tom washed and dried the dishes and scoured the pots and pans and then went over to the bunkhouse where there was a fire going in the pot-bellied stove. The warmth of the bunkhouse had us all yawning and ready to hit the hay.

We were up at the crack of dawn and directly after breakfast Wallace and me packed our horses and saddled up and headed for the home ranch. The storm was over but there was a chill to the morning breeze, a feeling of fall in the air. Bill and Tom Mayberry, Old Peck and Dallas were staying over a few days at the Veseth place to look after the cattle.

I had missed out on the hunting trip with Wallace, but now that it was over and done with, that short two days and one night trail drive was something I wouldn't have missed for anything in the world. Somehow, when we rode up to the Circle C home ranch with the familiar log cabins and pole corrals, it seemed like I'd been gone for a long time and it was good to be home once more.

AL TAYLOR, the ranch cook, told us that the fall roundup had pulled out at daybreak, to camp at Big Warm. I'd lost track of the days. Al said it was Sunday so I knew I'd have to catch the morning stage to Malta and board the night train for Great Falls. That way I'd be on time when school opened on Tuesday.

After Wallace had gone to the office to turn in the tally on the Mayberry cattle, Al said there was plenty of hot water in the tank attached to the kitchen range if I wanted to take a bath in one of the wash tubs, and he said he'd give me a haircut. Al had bought a second-hand barber chair and had set it up in a corner of the mess hall for making side money at barbering.

Half an hour later I shed my boots, Levi's and shirt, and stood barefooted, sewed up in Long George Baker's wool undershirt. Al got a laugh out of the comical sight, then cut me loose with his barber scissors. As I stood there naked. Al's lips puckered in a soundless whistle as he walked around me.

"Lordy mercy! What ails you, kid? You comin' down with the measles? You're broke out all over, especially your back."

"I've been itchy all over, scratchin' myself for days," I said. "It must be that wool undershirt Wallace sewed me up in."

Al gingerly lifted the undershirt and examined it closely for a long minute, then opened the back door and carried it out, holding it at arm's length between thumb and forefinger. He dropped it into an iron drum with holes punched in the sides that was used to burn trash. Al poured in some kerosene and touched a match to it, then came back and washed his hands in hot soapy water.

"You're lousy as a pet coon!" he said with a wry grin. "Step in that tub of hot water and squat down cross-legged."

"Lousy?" I echoed in a sickly tone. "Lousy? You sure, Al, or just joshin'? I've never been lousy in my whole life. Never seen what a cootie looks like. Only dog fleas."

"Take my word for it, feller. You're lousy as a sheepherder," Al assured me. He held a can of kerosene over the tub and soon the hot water had an oily scum. Then he told me to shut my eyes while he poured a generous amount of kerosene on my untrimmed hair and rubbed it into my scalp. He handed me a big wash rag and a bar of yellow laundry soap that smelled strongly of lye.

After I had soaped my hair and body, with Al scrubbing my back, I transferred to another tub Al had filled with hot water to rinse off the soap and kerosene. While I was drying myself with a rough towel Wallace showed up.

"Your kid brother's lousy as a damn sheepherder," Al Taylor told him. "I'm in the process of de-lousing him."

"You got another customer for de-lousing, too," Wallace said with a resigned grin. "I shoulda known that

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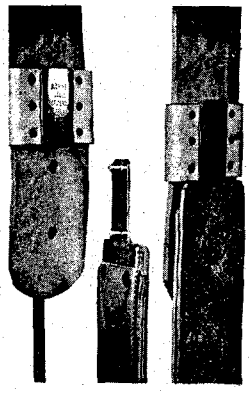

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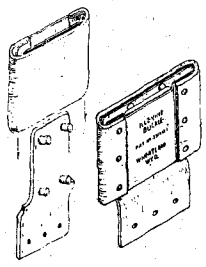

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wolfer's underwear would be lousy."

When Al threw my black sateen shirt and Levi overalls in the trash can and burned them, I was out of ranch clothes. I was glad that the roundup had pulled out so I wouldn't get joshed about wearing my town clothes consisting of short pants, long black stockings, button shoes and a jellybean cap. Al had used the clippers on my hair, giving me a lion tamer's roach to make doubly sure of the de-lousing. My scrubbed hide still smelled strongly of kerosene, and bay rum had been doused plentifully on my head.

Wallace gave off that same kerosene odor when he got his bath and haircut and was dressed from the hide out in clean clothes. He treated the whole thing as a big joke on both of us, saying there never was a cowpuncher who at some time in his life hadn't been lousy. He told how Charley Russell had once sketched a comical picture of a couple of cowpunchers squatting on a creek bank, naked. They had rocks in their hands pounding their wet undershirts and drawers. It was titled "Killing Seam Squirrels" or some such caption, and was printed on postcards by the Ridgely Printing Company in Great Falls. The way Wallace told it had Al Taylor and me laughing fit to bust.

Next morning I was waiting when the four-horse stage that ran between Zortman and Landusky to the railroad town of Malta pulled in with the mail sacks. I was the only passenger so I climbed aboard and sat up with the driver. My summer vacation had come to a happy end. Tomorrow morning I'd be back at the old brick Whittier Grammar School a few blocks from our home in Great Falls.

Like always, I was reluctant to leave the Circle C ranch which was my summer home, and there was an edge of sadness as we left it behind. But once we were underway I looked forward to meeting the old gang of kids I traveled with. We would be playing marbles in the school yard at recess, and games of "shinny on your side" after school let out for the day. When the Missouri River froze over there would be games of hockey, with real hockey sticks and a hard rubber puck, and skating from the boathouse to First Island where Sun River emptied into the Missouri.

It was something to look forward to and a far cry from my cowboy life at the Circle C ranch and I'd shore tell it plumb scary to the town kids about that cold trail drive and being lousy to boot.

Was Tom Horn Two Men?

(Continued from page 17)

Willie Nickell killing I could never find your trail, and I pride myself on being a trailer."

Horn: "No, - - - - - -; I left no trail. The only way to cover up your trail is to go barefooted."

Lefors: "Where was your horse?"

Horn: "He was a - - - - - - long ways off."

Lefors: "I would be afraid to leave my horse so far away; you might get cut off from him."

Horn: "You don't take much chances. These people are unorganized, and anyway I depend on this gun of mine. The only thing I was ever afraid of was that I would be compelled to kill an officer or a man I didn't want to; I would do everything to keep from being seen, but if he kept after me, I would certainly kill him."

Lefors: "I never knew why Willie Nickell was killed. Was it because he was one of the victims named, or was it compulsory?"

Horn: "I think it was this way. Suppose a man was in the big draw to the right of the gate—you know where it is—the draw that comes into the main creek below Nickell's house where Nickell was shot. Well, suppose a man was in that, and the kid came riding up on him from this way, and suppose the kid started to run for the house, and the fellow headed him off at the gate and killed him to keep him from going to the house and raising a hell of a commotion. That is the way I think it occurred."

Lefors: "Have you got your money yet for the killing of Nickell?"

Horn: "I got that before I did the job."

Lefors: "You got $500 for that. Why did you cut the price?"

Horn: "I got $2,100."

Lefors: "How much is that a man?"

Horn: "That is for three dead men, and one man shot at five times. Killing is my specialty. I look at it as a business proposition, and I think I have a corner on the market."

The biggest riddle in the case involves this conversation. It seemed too obvious. Joe Lefors' questions were irrelevant to the purported purpose of their meeting. An experienced man like Tom Horn, even if he had had a few drinks, should have immediately sensed the wrongness of the situation and the incriminating questions. Closed doors and such conversation in the U. S. Marshal's office? Tom had been warned about Joe Lefors. Certainly there was no basis for an exchange of confidences.

And so it was this seemingly unmitigated braggadocio which put Tom Horn behind bars in Cheyenne. The trial was declared in session at the Laramie County Courthouse with Judge Richard H. Scott hearing the case. The prosecution was led by Walter R. Stoll, assisted by attorneys H. Waldo Moore and Clyde M. Watts. The defense was composed of J. W. Lacey, Edward T. Clark, T. Blake Kennedy, and R. N. Matson. The jury impaneled was made up of men who would, by occupation and background, tend to favor the small land owners—not detectives hired by big stock outfits.

THE DEFENSE was the best legal counsel money could buy in Wyoming. It starred Judge J. W. Lacey, who seldom lost an important case. Lacey was also a district judge for the U. S. District of Wyoming, as well as brother-in-law and later partner of Justice Willis Van DeVenter of the United States Supreme Court. The prosecution, on the other hand, was untested in heavy jurisprudence battles, and up until that time lacked recognition in the Wyoming legal profession.

Every hour of the trial was made sen-

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sational copy and Wyoming and Colorado newspapers boomed in circulation. Interest in the case grew nationwide. The *Denver Post* sent its crack reporters and illustrators to cover the proceedings. A parade of curious traipsed to and from the scene of the crime in Iron Mountain. Horn, the Nickells, and witnesses were dissected by the press almost daily. If events at the trial weren't exciting enough, a twist was occasionally fabricated. Enough was testified, gossipped, and written in the trial's two weeks to forever engrain Tom Horn and Willie Nickell into the lore and legends of Wyoming.

The prosecution took the initiative in the case and held it. One ponders the counselling Tom Horn had regarding his so-called confession to Joe Lefors. It was a dilemma and no discernible format was presented to refute it. Tom Horn testified that in his talk with Lefors he had bragged, and that he was under certain pressure. He also testified that he had wanted the job; he wanted to get out of the country, and he was "merely joshing" to impress Joe Lefors. The fact that Horn had been drinking for some time prior to the joshing was well established.

The defense bungled the presentation of its case as to Tom Horn's whereabouts during the days immediately preceding the killing of Willie Nickell and the day after. Horn's attorneys couldn't seem to get together during crucial moments in the case's course. They also blundered in presenting a well-known "yarn spinner" to the court in their client's behalf. Walter Stoll made hash out of the cowboy's testimony.

On the other hand, Stoll built the state's case carefully and step by step. He linked Horn with the killing of Fred Powell and William Lewis, and the shots fired at Kels Nickell. Stoll painted a word picture of Tom Horn, suggesting that he was the worst kind of rogue, drinking, fighting, and shooting at innocent homebodies.

The team of T. F. Burke and Judge Lacey made no strong attempt to identify their client as a scout who had served his country faithfully during the Apache wars. William MacLeod Raine claimed to have seen a citation signed by General Nelson Miles which was given Horn for bravery. Tom Horn's record as a mule packer in the war with Spain would have been testimony to his character and devotion to duty. He was patriotic. Nor did he have a criminal record. He had served the Pinkertons, a nationally recognized detective agency. Many facets of Horn's experiences and character would undoubtedly have impressed the jury.

Additionally, for the defense, there was factual and undeniable evidence as to the amount of cattle rustling which had gone on and was still going on in Wyoming. The necessity of stock detectives was recognized, so his occupation was not alien. The Wyoming Stock Growers Association consistently maintained a strong force of gun-packing detectives, as did the Union Pacific. These were important parallels.

Kels P. Nickell, it appears, should have made a choice witness for the defense. His temper, apparent aggressiveness, and tendency toward hostility would have strengthened Horn's case.

Authorities on courtroom procedure have often debated as to whether the court erred at trial in not allowing the defense to introduce evidence to show motive and the possibility that others may have committed the crime. In the cross-examination of Kels P. Nickell, the fact was brought out that there had been trouble between the deceased Willie and Gus and Victor Miller. The prosecution objected to this as they did the question as to the possibility of trouble between Kels P. Nickell and James Miller. The court disallowed further discussion along such lines. In doing so, Walter Stoll won crucial points.

William MacLeod Raine attended sessions of the trial. In his writings and our conversations he made a far stronger case as to Tom's innocence than did defense attorneys. He said it was puzzling to him why one who had done so much to bring law and order to the country would have spent the last years of his life tearing down what he helped to build. Significantly, Mr. Raine pointed out that Tom Horn bore the brunt of the Wyoming's wrath resulting from the Johnson County Cattlemen's invasion, even though the case was ten years removed. Cattlemen had done wrong and gotten away with it. Horn represented the cattleman's image and was crucified because of them.

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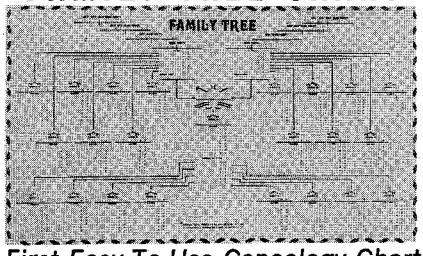

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In addition to Raine's feelings about Tom Horn, I have talked to old-timers in and around Laramie who made similar statements. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chatterton and T. Joe Cahill both agreed that the evidence submitted in an effort to have the death sentence postponed was more convincing than that presented at the trial.

The case as prepared by the plaintiffs was one of largely circumstantial evidence linked with a confession. Either facet could not technically stand alone. Circumstance and the confession supplemented each other, along with other points in the case, to convince the jury of guilt. The jury was instructed "to be satisfied of guilt beyond a reason of a doubt." Law libraries undoubtedly could produce numerous acquittals on similar grounds and instructions.

The interim period between Tom Horn's acceptance of the guilty verdict and his death held excitement and saw more poor judgment exercised. The Horn-Coble escape plot of January 1903 was bungled and made the headlines of the *Wyoming Tribune* and a host of regional local newspapers. The pair had been sold out by a cellmate of Horn. It involved a snowball in the window as the signal and dynamiting the jail's wall so Tom could escape. Tom Horn's later attempt in July was the crowning fiasco. Caution and more caution was subsequently exercised in and around the Laramie county jail. John Coble was tailed every time he rode into Cheyenne from this time on. He was Horn's only hope.

THE WYOMING Stock Growers Association kept out of the case—at least as far as the record goes. Some of this good judgment may be due to the sound thinking of Miss Alice Smith, the gracious lady who was the Association's efficient and beloved secretary from 1896 to 1922. J. M. Carey had made no bones about his feelings. He was a force in the Association, so Horn's friendship was not encouraged in any way. Additionally, Judge Carey had weeded out most of the radicals of the organization. In an exchange of letters, Miss Smith left no doubt as to the Association's position:

Dear Madam

There is a gang of thieves in this neighboorhood killing cattle and stealing horses and I want a good man to help me watch and catch them. Can you send me Tom Horn or please send me his address for reference to my standing se [see] D. R. Please answer by return mail.

Very respectively
J. E.
E....., Wyoming
Dec. 7, 1901

Mr. J. E.
E....., Wyoming
Dear Sir:

In reply to yours of Dec. 2nd, would say, that we think a letter directed to Tom Horn at Bosler, Wyoming, in care of Iron Mountain Ranch Co., will reach him. You of course understand that he is not in the employ of the Association.

Yours truly,
Alice Smith, Secretary

I had several unforgettable interviews with Mr. Chatterton, who was Governor of Wyoming during the Horn case. From his memoirs, published under the imprint of Powder Publishers, I quote his statement regarding attempts to save Tom Horn:

"The attempt to clear Horn by means of four alibis at the trial and by various alibi affidavits presented to the Governor were all disproved by the prosecution. The attempt to fasten the crime upon Victor Miller was by the affidavit made by Miss Glendolene Myrtle Kimmell, secured by John C. Coble, the payoff man, on October 13, 1903, in Kansas City. Miss Kimmell had testified at the coroner's inquest in July 1901, but made no statement as to Victor Miller. Miss Kimmell was the school teacher at Iron Mountain and lived at the Miller Ranch, where Horn slept the night before he killed Willie Nickell. She was reputed to be Horn's sweetheart. In her lengthy affidavit, she said that Victor Miller had confessed to her that he killed Willie Nickell."

Will Barnes, Arizona historian, comments on Horn's participating at the Battle of Cibicue, as told in his autobiography, as being "a barefaced lie from start to finish." Al Sieber, Chief of Scouts for General Crook and Nelson A. Miles in the principal campaigns against the Arizona Apaches, discredits Tom Horn's role as a scout. Judge Lacey, chief counsel for Horn's defense years later told William R. Coe, wealthy friend and patron in Wyoming, that he felt Horn was guilty. But only one person that I know of contended that Horn killed Willie Nickell deliberately. He was a prominent Denver attorney. This attorney was familiar with the case, having done considerable research in connection with litigation involving Tom Horn's autobiography.

ONE FALL AFTERNOON I drove over to Boulder to see Tom Horn's grave. While there, I visited with the late A. A. Paddock, genial editor of the *Boulder Camera*. Mr. Paddock had known Tom Horn's brother Charles.

One of my biggest disappointments in researching and interviewing was the fact that I discovered that Tom Horn's sister, a Mrs. Prosser, had lived in Briggsdale, Colorado, less than twenty miles from Ault where I grew up. My father had known her quite well. Mrs. Prosser died in 1954. According to neighbors, she had burned a lot of old letters and papers shortly before death.

One of the most important and convincing interviews favoring Horn that I was privileged to have was with Dr. George P. Johnston. Our meeting took place in his office in Cheyenne on February 19, 1954. He was ninety-one. During our long talk, Dr. Johnston said that he knew the situation around Iron Mountain prior to the shooting since he had doctored the Millers, Nickells, and John Coble. He added, "I knew Walter Stoll, the prosecuting attorney, as well as one man can get to know another." He called Stoll one of the most brilliant minds to ever come to Wyoming and one of the poorest politicians. Dr. Johnston was pointed in his statement, saying, "Horn

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was railroaded by the jury." He was emphatic during our interview that the gun carried by Tom Horn was a .30-40 Winchester, while the gun which killed Willie Nickell was a larger caliber. He testified to this effect at the trial.

Dr. Johnston had been one of the three doctors who performed the post-mortem on Willie Nickell's body. In recording my interview, I wrote, "Dr. Johnston indicated that he believed the shooting was done by neighbors of the Nickells. The doctor went on to tell of the execution. He called Tom the calmest man at his execution, adding, "He was the grand old stoic. I pronounced Horn dead at the execution and then cut him down from the gallows." Dr. Johnston said it was his gun which Horn used in his attempted jailbreak. He had traded it to John Coble.

When November 20, the day Tom Horn was to die, finally arrived, Cheyenne took on a carnival-like atmosphere. Saloons were packed and a lot of card-table money was bet that he wouldn't hang. Hundreds of people jammed the streets and, as the hour for the execution drew near, pressed around Laramie County Courthouse. Cordons of special police were summoned to keep the onlookers at a distance. A machine-gun was mounted on top of the building. A few blocks away, in the Capitol, Governor Chatterton pondered the wisdom of a stay of execution.

A high board fence had been hastily erected to veil the gallows and scaffolding from public view. Shortly before the announced time of execution, newspapermen, law officers, and friends of Horn who had been invited to witness the grim event quietly filed into the arena. There were delays which must have been exasperating; a northerly wind blowing over a skift of frozen snow added to the misery of the hour.

At last all was set. When Tom Horn was escorted from his cell, he was handcuffed and showed no signs of being distraught. During his last minutes he joshed, heard a mournful railroad ballad sung by his friends, Charles and Frank Erwin, and then listened as a churchman droned a message asking for eternal forgiveness. From down below, where knees were beginning to buckle, there came muffled sounds of sobbing.

As hangman T. Joe Cahill readied the black hood to slip over the prisoner's head and another man fumbled with the noose, Tom Horn, surveying the witnesses, remarked icily: "That's the sickest-looking lot of damned sheriffs I ever saw."

THE LATE John Charles Thompson, dean of Wyoming newspapermen, was at the hanging. In a paper delivered before the Denver Westerners, he dramatically told the story of the execution. He had covered the hanging for the *Wyoming Tribune*. In his closing remarks he stated, "I did not see him die. Immediately upon his plunge through the trapdoor, the witnesses were required to leave. I hesitated sufficiently to watch the dangling body turn. It made precisely one-half turn—and stopped.

"I was the first man to get out of the

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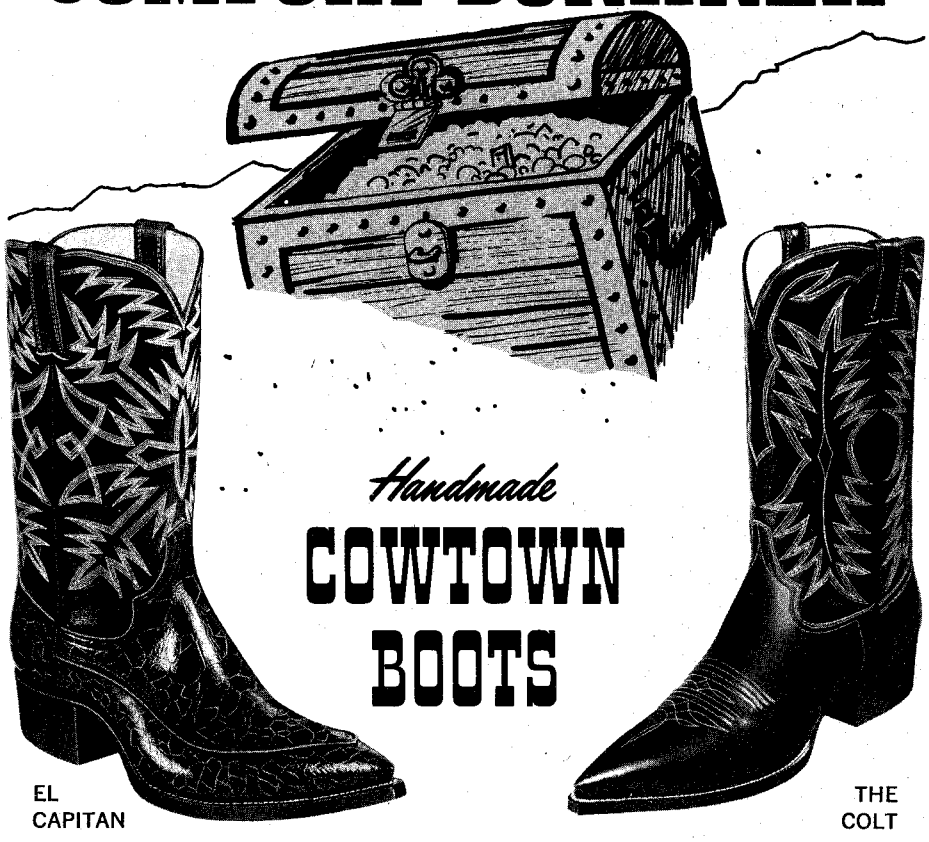

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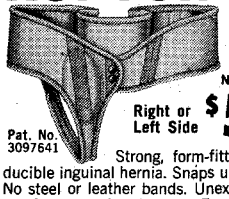

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courthouse. I emerged at a high lope, and was intercepted in the middle of a street by Kels Nickell, who had contrived to get through the police line.

"'Is the s-o-b dead?' he demanded.

"'Yes,' I replied, and loped on—I had an extra to get out.

"An hour later I saw the Horn cadaver on a slab at the Gleason mortuary. There was no mistaking the body—it was that of Horn."

Charles Horn was a drayman in Boulder, Colorado. He drove a team and wagon to Cheyenne, arriving in time to receive his brother's body. A few days later, he wrote:

Boulder, Colorado,
November 27, 1903

Mr. John C. Coble
Bosler, Wyoming
Kind Friend:

We buried Tom with all due respect that relatives could show. We had the largest funeral that was ever in this town. Everybody showed due courtesy to the hearse as it went seven blocks. They stood on the street with their hats off as we passed along. When we arrived at the cemetery there was hardly standing room. There must have been anyhow 2500 people at the funeral.

Tom told our sheriff that he had written me a letter. I have never received it. I expected this letter all of the time, and this is the reason that I never wrote.

I would like to know if he had any personal effects; if so, please let me know what and where they are. I received his hat, shoes, and grip from Sheriff Smalley.

We appreciate, from the bottom of our hearts, all that you have done for him; that is, myself and family.

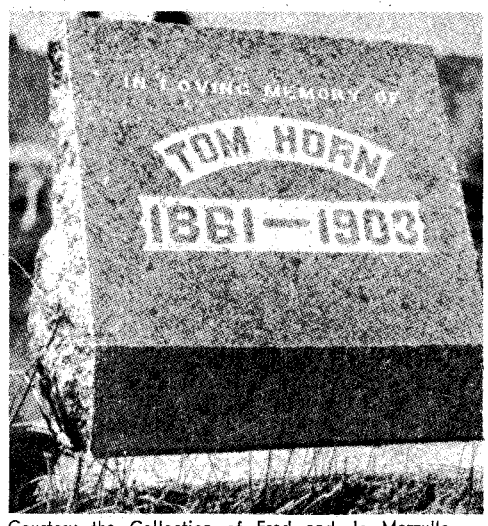
I received a letter from Attorney Burke of Cheyenne, requesting me to place guard over the grave, which I had already made arrangements for, and did, and this guard still remains and will until I call him off. He is an old friend of ours and Tom's, and never falls down on anything.

I see by the papers that you are seriously ill, which I am exceedingly sorry to hear.

Hoping to hear from you soon, and that you will be in better health when this reaches you, I remain

Your friend.
Charles Horn

One of the enigmas in Tom Horn's fading shadow was his bond of friendship with John C. Coble. The lives of Coble and Horn were inextricably interwoven the first time Tom squeezed a trigger on the ranges northwest of Cheyenne. Coble's trip East at the time of the slaying of the boy was obvious, it seems, and precluded any possibility that he was the killer. Coble's life was sad—his ranch home burned and his only son died at an early age. He paid for Tom's casket, tombstone, published his autobiography, and cherished the memory of him. Tragically, Coble died a few years later by his own hand. If and when Tom Horn and John Coble shook hands in agreement, it was a deal to the bitter end.



Courtesy the Collection of Fred and Jo Mazzulla, Denver, Colorado

Tom Horn's tombstone.

The case was anticlimactic to a lot of history. A way of life died on the gallows with Tom Horn. Neither Cheyenne nor Wyoming has been the same since, for the old gave way to new and suddenly the frontier called Wyoming slipped away—gone forever.

Daughter of Mickey Free

(Continued from page 11)

plot on the high point overlooking the Apache world and on which he had built his well-known 20"x40" tin shack; the 160 acres was a fertile farm of San Carlos bottomland now occupied by son Willy. Over a period of about twenty years Mickey had rented out some of the plots to Juana's siblings, others to relatives on Spring Day's side of the family, others he had "deeded" to clanspeople. One twenty-acre plot near Cooley's Park went to Willy, an adjoining twenty-acre plot went to Josie, another to Spring Day's Ethlabah siblings. All the inheritors were as grimly determined to hang on to their land as was Fanny, but none had as much trouble with hopeful claim-jumpers.

Agency officials would hold hearings, adjudicate cases which were easy to handle, but leave the tough ones like the "Free Tracts" to the bottom of the pile. Any promotion or transfer of personnel would always cause a delay—usually welcomed by officialdom and decried by the Indians. It was this condition, coupled with the tardiness of Washington officials to answer letters and make decisions, which caused the affairs of the "Free Woman" to drag on until the end of the war. At that time new officers with fresh ideas filtered into the reservations.

In the meanwhile Fanny, feeling better and not admitting even to herself that she suffered with the dreaded fever, or that she could not conquer it as her father had until he was in his sixties, had married Cotter-Jose (Carter-Josay) as the white man called him.

Cotter, an enterprising young son of

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Our congratulations go to Doyle Williams, Rt. 1, Box 67, Okemah, Okla., who was last year's champion at the Prospectors Club Meet. This year, he EARNED FIRST PLACE AT BOTH THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MEET AND THE INTERNATIONAL PROSPECTORS CLUB MEET. To see Doyle work with his detector is a joy. Previously, Doyle had used other brands of detectors. His choice of instruments this year was one of our NEW BREED OF HUNTER DETECTORS.

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a former warrior, proceeded soon after the wedding to move a family of his own clan onto the disputed meadow and gave them one-fourth of it to cultivate. Another fourth went to Kay Ethlabah who had been a classmate of Fanny at Phoenix Indian School and was now back on the reservation teaching at Theodore Roosevelt school and rearing a family of her own. Another fourth went on shares to Luke Riley Jr., a former scout, whose parentage stemmed back to One-Eye Riley who had married into the large Chief Unojo tribe when Fort Apache was first organized. Cotter reserved the other quarter for himself and Fanny.

ON December 31, 1919, a fateful letter arrived from Washington, signed by Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, denying Fanny any rights to the twenty-acre meadow and awarding the land to Preston Simms. Fanny was ordered to vacate the land and to compensate Simms for all the improvements he had made upon the property.

All devious devices known to both factions were then dug up to prevent the Fort Apache military commander from getting the controversy settled as the order from Baker specified. The Free Tract case immediately became tangled up more than ever in red tape. Exasperated, Captain Blatt sent a letter dated January 19, 1920 to Fanny asking her to come in and assign to Preston Simms absolute use of the land and pay him for his approximate $400.00 worth of improvements. Blatt knew that Fanny was not likely to do any such damn thing, so he let the matter drop on the assumption that Washington would be satisfied that things were being done, now that the letter was a matter of record.

However, Mr. Charles L. Davis, the new Agency superintendent, received a copy of the letter and had to write a letter of his own in reply. He noted the demand for $400.00 and stated his side of the case, thus passing the buck to his BIA headquarters in Washington. This letter was calculated to sidetrack the Free-Simms mess for many months as far as the civilian agency was concerned —but it landed right back in Baker's lap.

Meanwhile, Luis Flores, the elder, had died and that left one less witness against Fanny. Ramon, occasionally seen back on the reservation, was wearing a black patch where an eye had once been, and was considered to be a troublemaker and too unreliable to be a witness. Time was working in Fanny's favor in all ways, except one: her health. Her first born—a boy—was frail and lived only a few months. When the infant died, Fanny seemed to lose interest in life, and her husband Cotter believed that she now cared less about the land. He also became afraid he himself would catch the disease and soon took to drinking steadily. Fanny was virtually deserted.

However, she was not about to let "them" steal the land away from her as some people thought. She hung on to friends who were on her side and stood ready to fight people who were not. She sent for Willy and soon brother and sister had their heads together. Willy, not yet a lawyer but acting like one with a William Jennings Bryan tongue, connived with Chief Alchesay of the great White Mountain tribe to circulate a rumor that he (Alchesay) was going to take over the disputed meadow and build a rancheria on it for half his tribe. If this bluff didn't work the chief would take over the meadow in fact, knowing full well the military could not get him and 1,000 Apaches off without starting another war.

IN VIEW of this startling development, Captain Blatt reversed his position on March 1, 1920, and addressed a letter to Superintendent Davis saying he had ordered Preston Simms to vacate the land at once and that he had given permission to Fanny Free to reoccupy the meadow as she saw fit. Blatt said this matter "has long enough been hanging fire" and as far as his office was concerned it was now settled.

Within the next month a half dozen more letters were exchanged between the local authorities, and a like number made the trip between the reservation and Washington. On June 5, General Supervisor A. B. Stanion sent a report to Secretary Baker and John Barton Payne of the BIA stating that a local commission had reevaluated the condition and extent of improvements on the twenty-acre Free Tract and found that the $400.00 price was excessive and therefore pared it down to a fixed value of $208.88.

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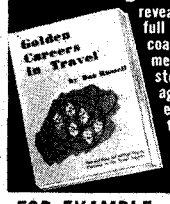

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When this met with a flat rejection a committee of three used current market values as a yardstick and set a rental value per month, as against the price of X number of bales of hay Simms had taken from the land, and came up with a balance of $100.00. If Fanny Free and her husband would forthwith pay Simms this amount the land would be hers free of all encumbrances. Secretary Baker then gave Fanny the date of November 1 to pay this amount. E. B. Meritt, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs, agreed to the time stipulation in a letter dated June 26 to Superintendent Davis.

Davis wrote back, reiterating the various acts of hostility which the Mexican element was committing and stating that Simms refused to move and that his cohorts were constantly harassing Fanny Free. He feared that unless law enforcement officers intervened there would be killings and so much more bad blood engendered the matter would never be settled.

On July 17 Meritt wrote to Davis and told him to take $100.00 out of his "contingent Indian Affairs fund," pay Simms and order him off the land, and get it settled. That was all right with Fanny, as she had no intention of paying for something that was already hers.

Slyly Simms took the money on the condition that he could remain on the property until the crops had been harvested that fall; the sergeant who negotiated the deal agreed to that without authority—and Fanny blew up. She had not been informed of the compromise until several days afterward and by then the final papers were on their way to Washington. Clansmen and friends advised Fanny to be patient; after all, it would only be a few more months.

The time dragged on and winter came and Simms pleaded for and got an extension from reservation officials, again without consulting Fanny. She was having another bout with her chronic illness and to keep her from doing something which might endanger her life, Willy moved her to the Indian Hospital in Phoenix. Fanny remained there two months then disappeared one night. The next day she showed up at the home of Willy and Edith Free in San Carlos, who now had a baby girl named Rosa. They naturally took Fanny in and she recuperated in the dry climate for the rest of the winter.

WHILE in Phoenix Fanny had been in touch with the Indian Rights Association, whose members worked in her behalf and kept her informed on how her affairs were coming along at Fort Apache. She took a dim view of the proceedings the organization reported. It was apparent the Agency officials were turning against her in their eagerness to cope with a *new* controversary stirred up by the volatile Mexican minority who had now come under the scrutiny of politicians in Washington following the Census Bureau count for 1920. With a lot of votes involved, pro or con, lawsuits were being prepared for the Federal Courts to determine whether the Mexicans were Americans or Mexican nationals. It also gave Simms an excuse not to move off the land when spring of 1921 rolled around.

The whole mess boiled over into the Harding administration and the new President made a decision which was final. Reallottments became the order of the day. The only stipulation was that local officials should exercise care not to uproot families who had a previous record of good standing and occupancy on properties under consideration.

People of both factions at Fort Apache obeyed the order stoically—all except Fanny Free and Preston Simms. Neither of them "had a previous record of good standing." Willy kept Fanny in San Carlos, fearful that she might actually go *Netdahe*—a war-to-the-death vow taken by old time Apaches. The obstreperous Simms planted another crop and sat tight. He brought in some stalwart relatives, kept them armed at all times, and they resisted the Agency police who tried to remove them short of killing them. The Army, for some unrevealed reason, was not called in.

As the summer of 1922 wore on, Fanny seemed to be definitely improving in health and she moved back to Fort Apache. October rolled around and the famous Harding executive order to the Army to turn the entire Fort Apache Reservation over to the Department of Interior went into effect. That order marked the end of the trail, as far as Fanny was concerned. She had been almost her former self again in health, but this must have brought on a relapse, though her mental attitude brought back the old fighting spirit with a rush.

There was nothing to do except take the Simms matter into her own hands. She stood alone now, and knew it.

Fanny took one of her father's old Green River knives, tucked it safely under her kachina dress, and headed for the mountain meadow adjacent to old Kinshiba—where the Spirits of departed ones lived. She had chosen a Saturday when all the hired hands would be home with their families, leaving Simms there alone. She stopped in the brushy swale along the boundary fence and watched

"I never take you anyplace! I took you to see the hangin' last week, didn't I?"

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for her chance. As it turned out she had to wait all day and all the following night, without food or water.

By dawn she had a high fever which blurred her vision. She did, however, see Simms emerge from the cabin door in the dawn's light. She got up and advanced upon him; he tensed and stopped as he saw her coming. Apparently her intention was to stab him, but she saw she could not get near enough. She drew the Green River and threw it. Fanny had never thrown a knife in her life, but something invisible must have guided this blade as its point sped true to the Mexican's throat. He tried to pull the blade out as he dropped.

Fanny withdrew into the brush and went home. That night it turned cold and rain fell in Canyon Day. Monday was more of the same. The arrested fever had flared up within her and she was trembling. Alone in her cabin that night Fanny Free did not live to see the dawn that came up dry and clear.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 7)

board and later one-half day in the old Ford.

Paved roads now make accessible many of the places that are discussed in your magazine article. These men would be amazed by what is going on today on the Navajo reservation, the colleges, high schools, vocational schools, super markets, newspaper *(Navajo Times)* and all the paved roads. Gas lines crossing the reservation and originating there make gas available to those near the lines; also electricity.

Well, time marches on and does bring changes. I didn't intend to write so much but I can go on and on about this subject. —Clydas Richard Burroughs, 207 W. Green, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

June TW—A Memorable Issue

Howdy, Pat!

The June 1969 TRUE WEST brought back memories of days of long ago. I knew a Ralph Collinson of Clarendon, Texas and think he was a relative of "The Cowboy From Yorkshire." Ralph Collinson came to Colorado and was boss on a ranch where I once worked.

I heard of "Those Murdering Herricks" when we lived in western Colorado and I have been on Kannah Creek many times. The Herrick killings happened several years before we went to western Colorado. And having worked in Leadville, Colorado I know something of the "Ice Palace."

I saw Charles A. Siringo when I was a boy. He stopped in Grand Junction, Colorado one time to see my father. Before that he had stopped at my uncle's ranch on the Dolores River when my father was there. At that time he was on the trail of some suspected outlaws, but I don't think he caught up with them on that trip. He mentions my father and my uncle in one of his books. —Tom Moss, Box 2004, Gardena, California 90247

(Continued on page 72)

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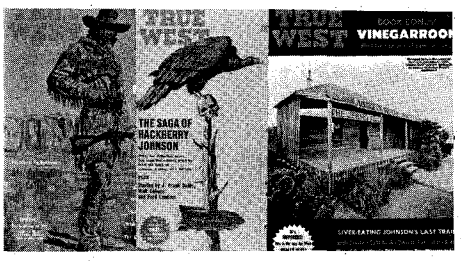

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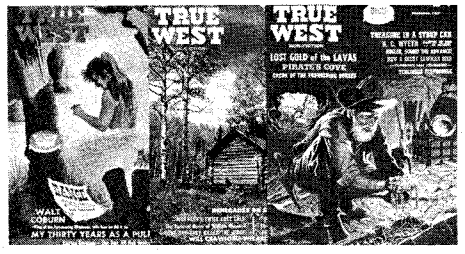

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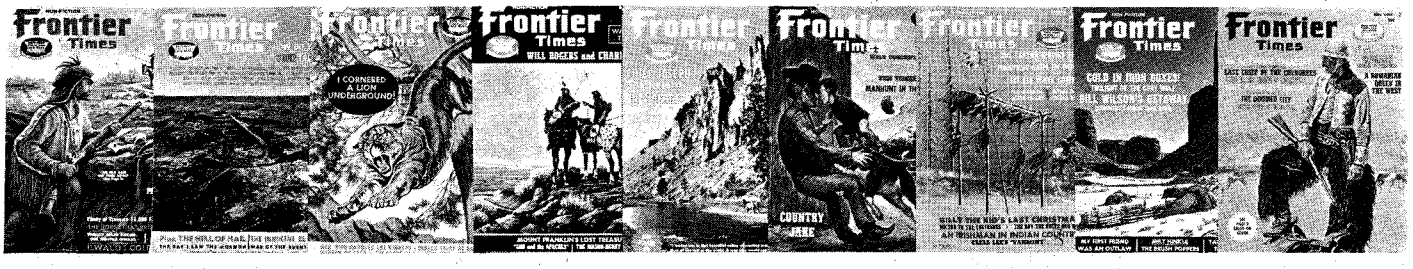

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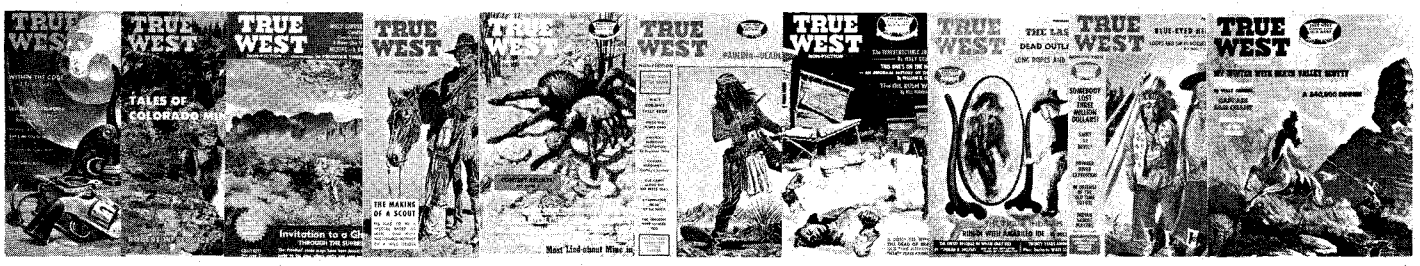

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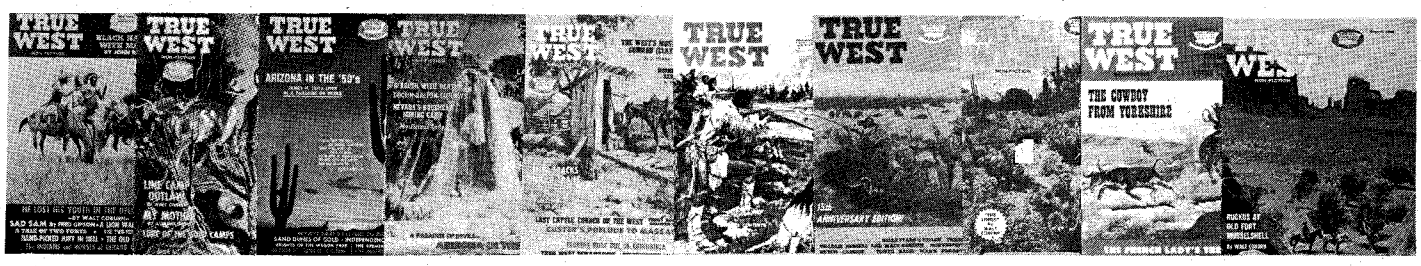

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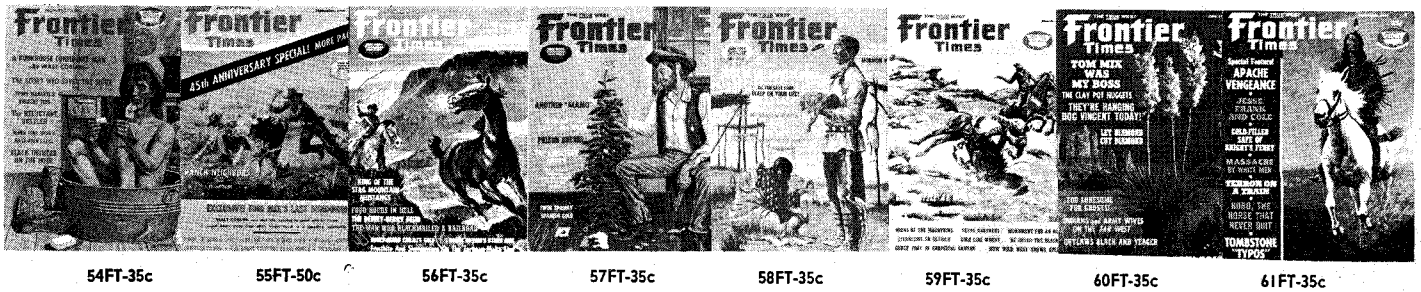

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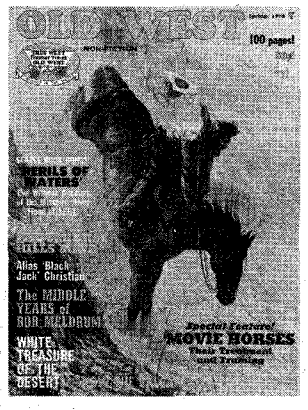

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The Camp That Died Hard

(Continued from page 32)

ing a shaft on an incline. This came to be known as the Goodale shaft.

Former residents moved back to Rochester and new people moved in. Old houses were repaired and new ones built. Dust rose in smothering rolls from freight outfits hauling merchandise to the store and supplies to the mine. Although across the nation it was a time of general unemployment and hardship, the miners of Rochester cashed their checks, leaned against the counter of Asa Cornforth's store, munched crackers lifted from the open cracker barrel in plain sight of the storekeeper and talked about THE MINE. When they mentioned the smaller mines—the Buffalo, the Longfellow, the Dickey and others—they called them by name. But when they said THE MINE, everyone understood it was the Watseka that was meant.

As work progressed in the Goodale shaft, silver appeared in some of the feeders, then copper. The camp was jubilant. Wasn't that the way of Butte? First a gold camp, then silver and finally copper making it the "richest hill on earth." Rochester was on her way to being a second Butte. Might even be better!

Town lots sold readily and claims were staked out with the hopes that down underneath lay a fortune in silver and copper. Optimism was riding high when Rochester received a blow that sent her reeling. Water—that bane of many a deep mine—rose up to challenge Goodale, and forced him to cease operations. Goodale, disappointed but not discouraged, urged the company to install pumps and strongly recommended the purchase of the mine. The superintendent's confidence gave confidence to others. The Watseka would not be shut down long, they felt. All that was needed was someone with money and vision like the men who had made Butte. Like W. A. Clark or Marcus Daly or that young fellow F. Agustus Heinze.

After a few weeks of idleness some felt the pinch of the empty pocketbook and went elsewhere in search of jobs, but the majority hung on. Those with a cow and a dozen hens could live as cheaply in Rochester as anywhere. Cheaper than most places. There was grass on the hills for the cow, and grasshoppers in the sage for the hens. The men washed out a little gold that the first prospectors had scorned to bother with, or got a little work in haying and harvest down in the valley. The women sewed patches on the men's shirts and bib overalls. They made over their own skirts and dresses for themselves and their children. Everyone scrimped and pinched and waited for the THE MINE to reopen.

And their faith was rewarded. One fine day A. W. McCune of Salt Lake City drove into camp, turned his handsome outfit over to a companion and began a thorough investigation of the Watseka. McCune liked what he saw. A short time later the whistle of the old mill gave out a welcome shriek. "Men, come back to work!" Or that's the way it was interpreted.

McCUNE put capable Carl Hand on as superintendent and in a matter of weeks there was the comforting chug-chugging of the pumps working day and night bringing the water up out of the shaft so the sinking could proceed. About 1,000 feet from the vertical Goodale shaft, the Watseka was sunk. By 1895 the Goodale had reached a depth of 550 feet and the Waseka, 571. The two shafts were connected by tunnels at the 200-, 300-, and 450-foot levels. At the latter level there were 1,800 feet of tunneling.

A new mill was built with a capacity of 150 tons of ore per day, three times the capacity of the old mill. The whole camp took pride in that fine mill. Women set their clocks and children learned to tell the time of day by its whistle.

An article in a county paper of 1895, written by a mining expert, declared that McCune had conquered the bugaboo of water in the Watseka. The flow was 800 gallons per minute while the pumpage was 1,500 gallons per minute, almost twice as much as needed. The writer predicted that the Watseka would become the greatest gold mine in the Northwest, not to mention the silver and copper it would pour forth. Under former owners the mine had produced $750,000. Under McCune and Hand $1,000,000 had been taken out and that was just a beginning.

With the Watseka leading the way, six other good-sized mines in the Rochester district went into production. The largest of these, the Elgin, a producer of high-grade ore, was owned by A. Hodges. Water had stopped Hodges at the 400-foot level. This was mentioned briefly in the same paper that lauded the Watseka, but stated that the shutdown would be brief. Pumps would be installed. The trouble at the Elgin caused little concern except for Hodges and the men he employed. The Elgin was merely a good mine, not a great one like the Watseka.

THE CAMP was booming. Carpenters worked early and late putting up houses for the miners and their families. Some say 300 men were working in the different mines; others say the Watseka employed that many alone. The Hardisty Hotel was built only a few hundred yards from the mill. There gay parties were held where wives and daughters of the elite wore expensive evening gowns and sparkling jewels. Besides the general merchandise store of Asa Cornforth, Ernst Falkner, William Klein and Frank Inabnet, there was Fred Arbo's shoe store which carried a full line of ladies' footwear as well as miner's boots. Milady's Millinery Shop stocked elegant hats covered with ostrich plumes. You could buy just about anything you wished in Rochester then, including plenty of liquor at Algee's saloon and some lesser places.

There was even an opera house, owned by Seyler and Stark, and some good outside talent was brought in. A band gave Sunday concerts and played at the Fourth of July celebrations at Twin Bridges, to which all of Rochester went.

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The log schoolhouse was no longer adequate and a two-story frame with several rooms on either floor loomed up on the north hill. Protestant church services and Sunday School were held in the Maccabees' Hall, while Catholic children received instruction and Mass was said in private homes. Everyone was busy and happy. For about a decade Rochester was the largest, liveliest, most prosperous town in Madison County. There was a saying that "McCune has the luck, the pluck and the money to make things go."

Yet during those golden years, that limpid liquid far down under the ground was on its way to destroy everything that hard work, vision and money had built up. Slowly the flow of water in the Watseka increased, causing little concern for awhile. The pumps were ample. But the time came when the pumps working at full capacity could not hold down the flow. Slowly the water level rose in the shafts, then into drifts and tunnels. McCune had called in the best engineers, every effort was made to check the rise of the water level, but it would not be checked. It was "like trying to stop the tide with a broom." The Watseka's whistle blew for the last time.

Of course, no one could believe it was the last. Not McCune, not Carl Hand, not any of the hundreds of men who had worked in the Watseka. The ore was there. They had all seen it, big rich veins of ore as in the great mines of Butte. A way would be found to beat that water devil again as it had been beat before. A man wouldn't go off and leave a fabulous fortune like that, not a man like McCune.

But McCune did go away. He hired a guard to protect his valuable equipment from vandals and left the town where he had been a leading citizen during its best years.

"He'll be back," said John Connor as the McCune surrey disappeared down the canyon.

"You bet he will," agreed Sam Claridge. "May take him a little time, few months, even a year, to get things going again. But McCune won't give up." Someone thought that McCune planned to be back in the fall. That fall there was a rumor that McCune was coming back in the spring.

ONE NIGHT Maccabee Hall caught fire, the flames lighting up the town. Men jumped out of bed, pulled on their boots and ran. Women didn't wait to dress but went with coats over nightgowns. There was no fire department other than an impromptu bucket brigade. The fire came near the Hardisty Hotel and it looked like that would go too. The Hardistys brought out all of their blankets, and with many helping, the blankets were dipped in water then spread out to cover the entire roof and sides of the hotel. Water was thrown on the blankets to keep them wet. It was hard hot work and in the excitement some of the water soaked the workers instead of the blankets. But the hotel was saved.

The Maccabees did not rebuild their hall. They would wait until THE MINE reopened. For awhile religious services were held in the schoolhouse. The town shrank. Store buildings stood vacant. It was said that "kids have to be counted twice to find enough to hold school." Still the camp did not die. Some of the smaller mines, working without machinery, continued to operate. By then, both Twin Bridges twelve miles to the east and Melrose twelve miles to the west were on the railroad. Shipping costs were down. A good six-horse team could haul five tons of ore from Rochester to either town and return in a day.

Shortly before 1913, the year the men of my family and my brother's partner Leigh Pratt leased Bettina's Emma mine, the old camp had taken a new lease on life. The Blowout, a promising mine located about a quarter of a mile from the Watseka, installed machinery and employed about twenty-five men. Most of them boarded at Hungate's boardinghouse, a few at the hotel, and a few with families lived in private homes.

Algee's saloon was gone but Ike Hanson, a man of noble girth, kept one known as The Corner. The men had a Mineral Club. Children no longer needed to be counted twice to make a good showing in one room of the schoolhouse. For entertainment there were card parties, dances and picnics. The mail came up from Twin Bridges three times each week. Rochester was still a pretty good little town.

Albert Bettina was born in Germany and was graduated from one of that country's best schools, a mining engineer. He came to the United States as a young man and held responsible positions with the Tennessee Copper and other well-known mining companies. But he was restless and finally drifted up to Montana and to Rochester. During the heyday of the Watseka he located the Emma mine over the south hill from town. He took out some rich ore as he sank the shaft, and came to believe in the Emma as others did in the Watseka. He put almost every cent he had into it, depriving himself of a decent living to do so.

When the Watseka closed down, water came up in the Emma's shaft but Bettina drifted, found some good ore and stopped. However he was getting along in years and his health was poor. It was then that my people leased the Emma.

Bettina had never married but he must have named his mine in honor of some woman. Whether for mother, sister or sweetheart he never said. Being alone, working hard and living frugally he had become indifferent to the condition of his cabin and his person. When my father heard that the old man was not as well as usual he went over to see. He found Bettina sitting by his little cookstove, the door of the stove open and the cabin dense with smoke. But the old fellow greeted him cheerfully. "Nothing like a little smoke to warm up a house on a cold morning."

The smoke of many such mornings had settled into his long hair, his clothing and his skin. Young Leigh Pratt started calling him "Old Smokey." The name stuck.

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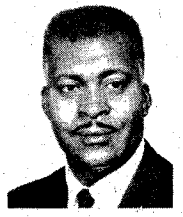

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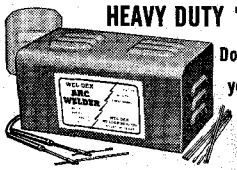

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prospecting over on the Big Hole River several years before. "I was walking along the side of a cliff above the river," he said. "The rocks were wet and slippery. I lost my footing and slid fifty feet down into the river. I wasn't hurt, just some bruises and scratches, but I got a mighty cold ducking. That was the last time I've ever been wet all over."

It was sometime later that my brother Charles found Bettina unable to keep his fire going or prepare food. Charles finally persuaded the old man it would be best to go down to Twin Bridges where there was a doctor. There was no hospital nearer than Butte sixty miles away but a couple lived in Twin Bridges who would for a moderate fee take care of a sick man who had no other place to go. It was to them that Charles took Bettina and summoned the doctor.

When my brother came home that evening he said, "The first thing those folks did was to give old Smokey a good bath and cut his hair. He looked like a different man."

My mother, who was strong on cleanliness, spoke up emphatically. "Oh, they shouldn't have done that! They should have just washed his face and hands first. Let him rest awhile, then his feet and legs, then gradually his body, a little at a time. But a full bath! The shock will kill him." Mother shook her head.

The next morning we learned that Albert Bettina had died during the night.

OLD SMOKEY was but one of the "queer old codgers" as my father called the old men who were spending their last days in Rochester, hoping and believing that the camp would boom again. One of these was John Connor. He had come as a youth and had laid by enough for his old age. We rented one of his neat cottages and lived next door to him for awhile. He got up early, as he had all of his life, cooked and ate a good breakfast, put his house in order, looked after his roses and pansies and other small chores. Then clean and neatly dressed, often wearing a white shirt, he walked up to The Corner. About ten in the evening someone would walk him back home, holding on to him to keep him from falling. This was a routine seldom broken.

On my father's birthday, Mr. Connor was invited over to birthday supper. That day Mr. Connor did not go to The Corner but spent the day puttering around the house and yard. A crony came down to see if he were all right. We overheard this explanation: "I'm invited to supper where there are ladies. In the presence of ladies I am a gentleman."

Connor's only relatives were two nephews in the East but he did not lack for friends. When he died, almost every man, woman and child in camp attended the funeral which was held in the dance hall. Although little more than a child, I remember feeling that the red rose on my black beaver hat was not suitable for the solemn occasion (and no girl would have gone to a funeral without a hat). With my mother's approval I removed the rose.

Then there was Old Mr. Lutz. No one spoke of him in any other way. He had built a tiny flume from Rabbit Springs to his claim and washed out enough gold to "keep body and soul together." He was friendly to meet but almost never went visiting or had company. Sometimes at night we would hear the sweet strains of a violin coming from his cabin.

Old Man Wing was well past eighty and Old Bill Ayers was near the eighty mark. Both had fought in the Civil War but on opposite sides. They were longtime friends but one day they got into an argument over some aspect of Stone River and had to fight it over again with their fists. Spectators said they put on a good show until Old Man Wing went down and later developed a shiner that was a beaut. But Old Bill Ayers sustained a cut lip and bloody nose which must have given some satisfaction to the older man. The next day they were friends again.

There were women, too, owning a little property and believing that "someday" it would be valuable again. Mrs. Predister, whom I was told was a witch, lived in a haunted house. I found her a gentle recluse who liked to have children visit in her home. The house was weathered and neglected on the outside but inside spoke of better times. And there was poor Mrs. Crosby, almost bent double with arthritis, living on an eight-dollar-a-month pension and what she could make doing washings on the scrubboard.

But not all of the believers were old people. There were young folks too, such as the Bowders, both still in their twenties. Bowder had a steady job in Butte (he would return, he said, when McCune came back). His wife and children lived on their property in Rochester. Once a year Bowder took a week off to visit his family. Once a year Mrs. Bowder gave birth to a new baby.

There was an air of hopefulness about the little camp. Again there were rumors that McCune expected to be back soon and open THE MINE. But there were tangible reasons for optimism too. The Blowout was looking better all the time and work was proceeding well in a dry shaft. Then one day drilling in a drift brought water. The hole was plugged and the water stopped. Again drilling tapped water and again the hole was plugged. When drilling in a different but not too distant place seemed satisfactory, dynamite was set and the fuse lighted. The bottom of the Blowout shaft was never seen again. Water came in with a flow that no available pumps could handle. It was the general opinion that an old drift in the water-filled Watseka had been opened with that charge of dynamite and it spelled the Blowout's doom.

One by one either water or lack of funds forced every mine in the district to close. Old people died; young ones, even the Bowders, moved away. Trucks came and hauled off everything from the Watseka that was above ground except the waste dumps. There was no longer need for a guard. Finally two widowed sisters, Mrs. Fisher and Mrs.

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Mueller, were the only two permanent residents. They continued to be for a number of years.

"We'll never leave Rochester," said Mrs. Fisher when urged by friends to move down to Twin Bridges.

"We'd be foolish to leave now," said Mrs. Mueller. "Prices of metals are going up. Mines can be worked easier and cheaper now and our property is within a stone's throw of the richest mine in the country."

But about 1937 fate took a hand. An earthquake filled in the well from which the sisters drew their water. The elderly women could not haul water from Rabbit Springs as they had years before. They were forced to leave. They did so with great reluctance. "We'll be back," they said to the friends who moved them out of the forlorn little place that had been their home since they were girls. Neither lived very long. They could not take transplanting.

The seventy-five-year-old camp was dead at last. Everything for which a use could be found—even the stones of our club house—was torn down and hauled away. The soil, enriched with the wastes of animals and humans over three-fourths of a century, grew bigger and better sagebrush than anywhere else in the vicinity.

That is the way it was the day I looked at where Rochester had been and was no more. The country all around there is used now only for grazing. In the fall of 1968 we visited Twin Bridges again and I asked a woman who owns some property in the old Rochester district, "Is there ever any talk about the Watseka?"

She smiled. "Just last month, engineers from Butte were out to look at THE MINE."

Somehow I felt better.

The Muleskinner Millionaire

(Continued from page 39)

was to buy a "winter home" in Houston, Texas—a home he was never known to have seen, let alone occupy.

Later, he sold an option on his mine to three Colorado Springs men, William Lennox, Ed Giddings and Judge Colburn. The mine made all of them millionaires. It produced more than $10 million. Strong used his sale money to buy Sam Altman's Free Coinage Mine on Bull Hill, where he made his million and a little to spare. But Altman, a sawmill operator, also made a million and had "The World's Highest Incorporated Town" named for him.

Always a heavy drinker and something of a rowdy, Sam Strong now became a heavy spender, as well. He also got tangled up with several women, some of dubious virtue, to whom (they swore) he had proposed marriage. With half-a-dozen breach of promise suits on his hands, one or two of them for a million, Strong, more or less in self-defense married in 1900 at age thirty-eight. He and his nineteen-year-old bride, Regina Neville of Altman, left for Paris on an extended honeymoon while things quieted down a little.

Returning to camp six months later, he

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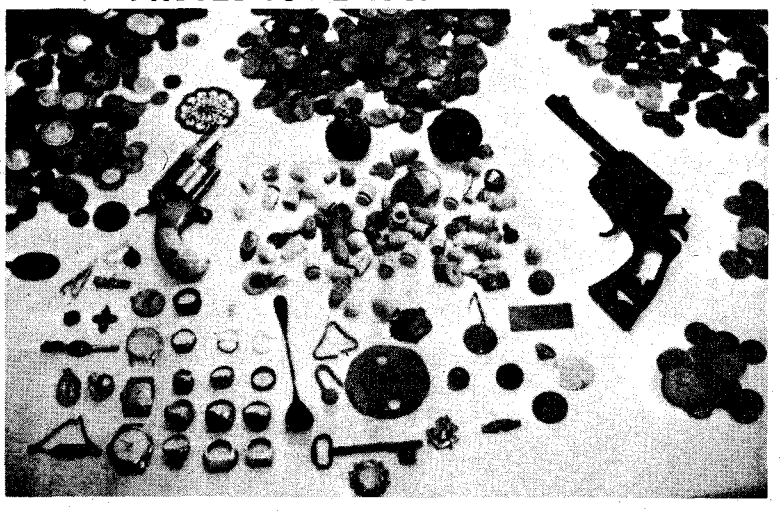

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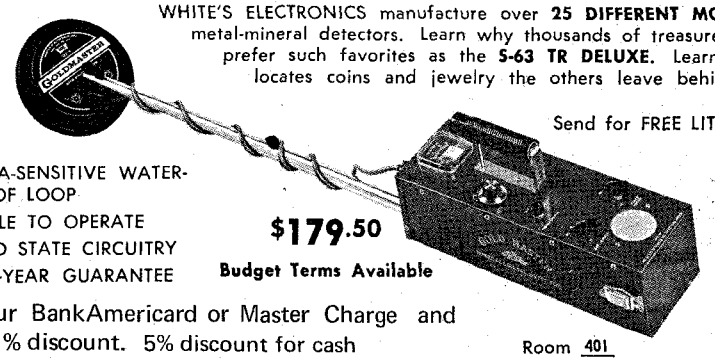

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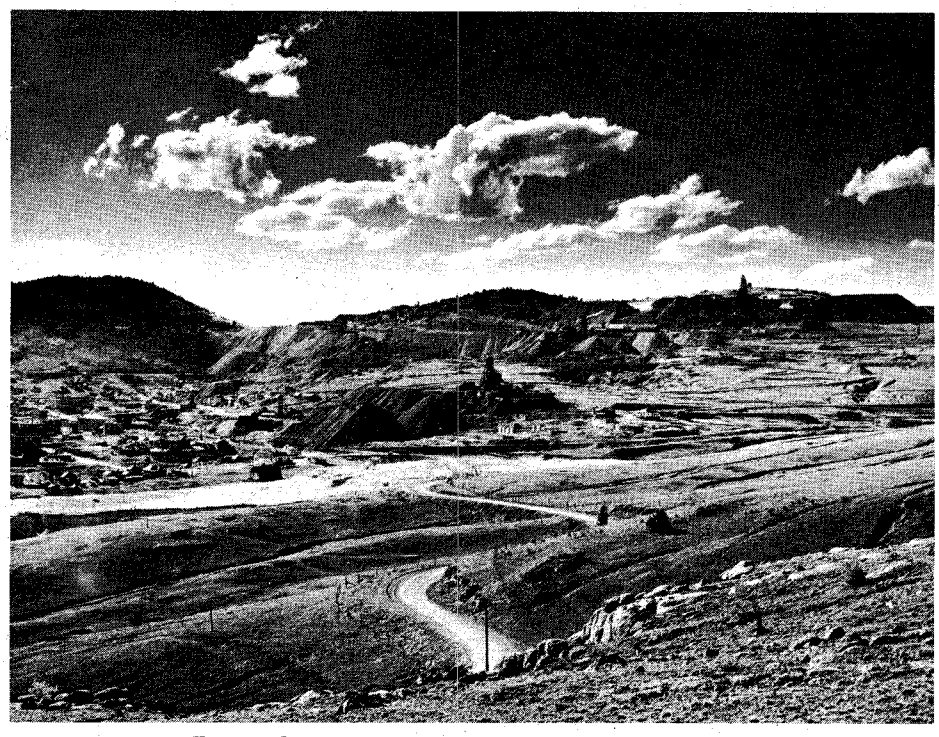

Famous Battle Mountain, showing part of Victor today.

settled the pending suits out of court for a total of $100,000. One frustrated former girl friend publicly accused him of blowing up the Strong Mine during the labor war of 1893 in an effort to dissuade Colburn, Lennox and Giddings from taking up their $60,000 option on the mine. Sam was tried and acquitted.

Actually, the mine was blown up by hired labor goons. At least that was the consensus. After the explosion, union members took Sam McDonald, super of the mine, and two of his men and imprisoned them in a mine shaft on Bull Cliff for three months. These laborers had been in the Strong Mine when it was blown up.

Strong did a lot of gambling in the Cripple Creek dives, usually accompanied by his father-in-law, John Neville, a man little older than himself. One night in Grant Crumley's Newport saloon and gambling rooms, Strong lost $2,000 playing roulette, which he paid by IOUs. Next day, claiming the wheel had been "fixed" he offered to settle for $200. Crumley refused. The two men were enemies anyhow.

Strong did his gambling in other joints for a few weeks, disregarding his debt to Crumley. He was a mean gambler. Playing with a group of miners or muleskinners, he would push a thousand or two into the pot and jibe the working stiffs for not being able to cover his bets. He was an arrogant show-off.

"Why don't you go out and make a million like I did, then you will be able to play poker like a gentleman?" he'd say. The more he drank and gambled, the fewer friends he had.

A few weeks later, still owing Crumley $2,000, he stopped in again at the Newport late at night and won $300 on the wheel. Leaving, he stopped at the bar and said to Crumley, "Your wheel must have been honest tonight."

An altercation followed and Crumley, from behind the bar, shot Strong with a sawed-off shotgun. There were several witnesses, including John Neville. Strong lay dead on the floor, a gaping hole in his chest.

Crumley was tried for murder, but was freed. He claimed that Strong "went for a gun and I shot him in self-defense." Strong did carry a .38 pistol but it was found in his pocket after the shooting. However, a few of the witnesses swore that they had seen Strong reach for his pocket just before Crumley blasted him.

Crumley, whose reputation was unsavory, was nevertheless an important man in camp and a member of several influential organizations.

Many townspeople were unhappy with the court's decision, but Strong's former opponents at the poker table felt "He had it coming to him," or "He asked for it." And so, at the tender age of forty, muleskinner, roustabout, millionaire Sam Strong lay dead on a saloon floor for welching on a gambling debt. He left a cool million to his young and beautiful widow.

I talked with several old-timers (all dead now) who had played poker with Sam Strong and they said it was a wonder he wasn't killed sooner. "The money went to his head," said one, "and he became an overbearing s-o-b."

Camps of the Nut Pickers

(Continued from page 37)

There are several ways in which the shelled green nut is used in cooking. A sprinkling of them are dropped in the bottom of a hot Dutch oven or frying pan containing a little tallow or grease. Raw steak is then quickly placed over the nuts. For some reason the nut oil sharpens the browning process of the meat's surface. It also has a tenderizing effect. Young burro meat cooked this way cannot be told from beef. Gravy

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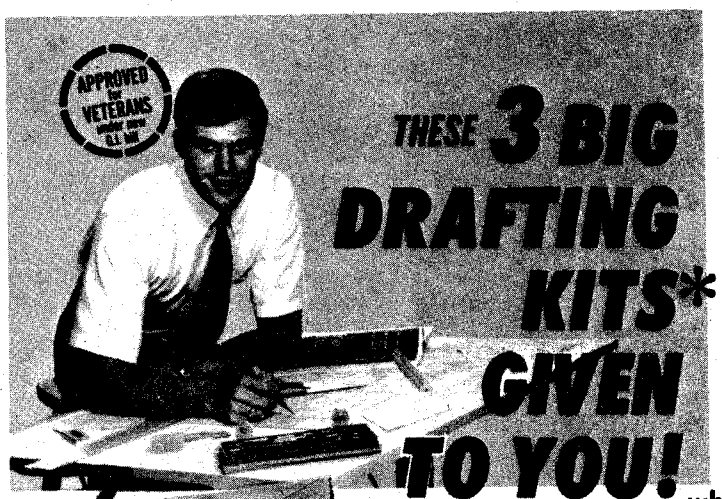

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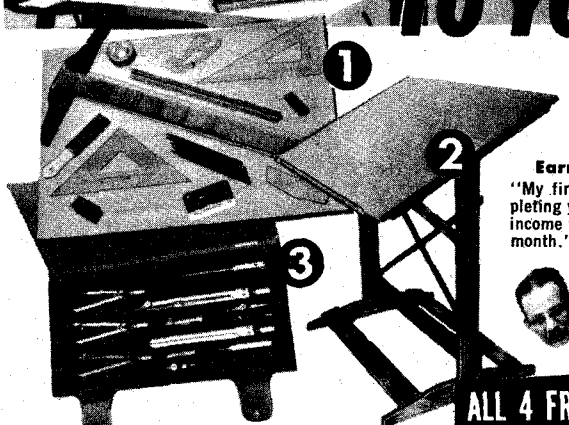

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made from the pan tastes as if butter were used with the flour additive instead of grease.

Corn kernels husked out by the lye or wood ash process as in making hominy, when used half and half with piñons becomes an unusual food. Again it seems to be the delicious flavor imparted by the oil, no grease being added to the corn when the two are mixed. In turn this mixture is dried under pressure into cakes.

The southwestern Indians, except the Utes of Colorado, had a kind of pemmican. It was made of jerky, shelled piñon nuts, corn meal and wild onions. Like the jerked meat all ingredients were dry and ground fine together. Carried in bulk in a sack it was merely mixed with water when used whether eaten raw or cooked in a pan. No berries or grease whatever was added.

When the piñon nut was first introduced to the buying public, Indian pickers were paid up to five cents per pound. During the depression years the nuts couldn't be sold to processors for more than three cents. This price was so low that it wasn't worthwhile to gather them during the fall harvest. After the depression years the price to the pickers ranged from five cents to eight cents and the Indians returned to the forests. During World War II piñons sold at a price ranging around sixty cents, and occasionally a little higher. Today the price is standardized to the picker at fifteen to eighteen cents.

As a cash crop it is the best in the entire Indian country. The crop requires no cultivation, no upkeep and no expense—just the labor of gathering them. The work is pleasant, a time for families to go picnicking in the clean air of the aromatic forests. Everyone picks—from the smallest toddler to the old folks. If a crop is not "on" that year in their own country, Indians will travel far to a forest that has put on. In New Mexico U. S. forest rangers keep watch and send out word of the estimated harvest. The nuts cannot be gathered until heavy frost kills and breaks open the mature cones. In almost all instances in the Southwest this occurs by the middle of October. During open winters the nuts can be picked up until Christmas.

Today the family unit repairs to a selected stand of piñon trees by wagon and car. In most cases wagon sheets and old tarpaulins are spread beneath the tree. Long poles are used to knock off the cones or shake the limbs to bring them spilling down. All the lower branches can be reached by the individual and all are usually heavy with nuts.

Once the tree is cleared of ripe cones, which also have spilled out nuts in the process, edges of the canvas are lifted to pile the mass together. The family then sits in a circle around it, picking nuts out of the debris with their fingers. In former times the picking was done entirely from the trash on the ground.

The basin, bucket or basket into which the nuts are placed is emptied into a sack wihch will hold anywhere from 75 to 125 pounds, depending on how large and heavy the nuts are. The sacked piñons are then stored in an airy, dry place until used. If sold (usually to an Indian trader), they are disposed of at once while their weight is greatest. A hundred-pound sack will lose ten to twelve pounds in weight in a thirty-day period. The ordinary family of five pickers can gather one sack each day. Not infrequently, depending on how filled with cones the tree is, they can manage a few pounds more.

A CURIOUS LORE has grown up about the piñon. It requires two years for a tree to produce a crop. The embryo cone comes from a flowering bud and matures the following year. It is widely believed that a tree produces nuts only in odd-numbered years—either the third, fifth or seventh. This isn't true, although several years may elapse before conditions are favorable for a stand of trees to put on. They bear according to the amount of rainfall, and especially the past winter's snow. Since the annual precipitation varies widely, some areas may produce no nuts for three or four years or longer. When there is sufficient water during the winter and the early spring, even a tree bearing maturing cones will blossom and bud. Another crop can be harvested from the same tree the following year.

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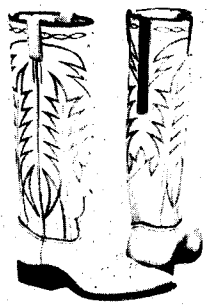

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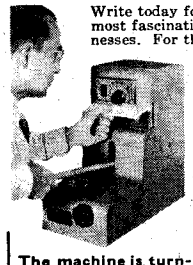

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is used to waterproof many things, such as the *tosjhay*, a water jar of woven willow. It is also used as a skin salve in medicine making and is melted and burned into chunks for use in herb dyes.

The piñon tree is also a weather prognosticator. Indians say that when it blossoms in the spring there will be a stormy, snowy winter followed by a wet spring. Otherwise the tree would not put on. When it does it is an indication of a fine growing season. The Indians' field crops are planted accordingly, even in the most arid regions.

The various tribes have legends concerning the piñon. The Navajo story relates that the tree once produced no nuts at all. This legend says that Bear Maiden got enamoured with a scoundrel, Coyote, infamous for practicing witchcraft. At his behest she betrayed her brothers. But the divine ones on high set about righting the wrong by saving the youngest one from harm.

Lending their magic powers to him he overcame the murderously inclined sister and Coyote. The brother slew her for preservation of The People (the Navajo). Cutting her body into bits as ordered, he threw the particles around, repeating the magic words instructed by the divine ones. During the course of this he cut off the brown nipples of Bear Maiden's breasts and threw them into the air. As luck would have it they fell into the piñon tree. They became the pine nuts and from that ancient time the tree has provided The People with food.

Several of the pueblo tribes in New Mexico have a somewhat mutual version. The tree first produced a large and bitter nut, like those found in northern Mexico today. It was unedible and the Indians never learned how it could be prepared for use. Many times the shamen sought counsel of the Holy Ones but could never learn how to put it to their benefit.

Then there came an extended period of successive drouths. No corn was raised for three years and by then that stored for such emergencies was exhausted. The rivers and creeks dried up and the springs began fading. The lack of rain ended wild plants that might have been used for food. As the land was denuded, wild game fled to distant parts. But despite the total lack of precipitation, up in the foothills and the mountains the piñon trees produced bountiful crops. Nuts were gathered and every means known was tried to destroy the bitter taste and make them into food. People who ate them anyway became deathly sick. Such was the situation the third winter when the shamen gathered in the kiva over a pile of the big nuts, praying to the Holy Ones for aid in the pueblos' extremity. People began dying of hunger and most were so weak they could hardly move.

On the fourth day Thunderbird came and perched on a rung of the ladder reaching into the kiva.

"I have been sent to aid you," he told the shamen. "For this you must make a sacrifice to me."

When asked what that would be he replied, "Your best turquoise shall be rendered into pollen (ground into dust) and cast to the four winds. Then I will cause lightning to dry up the cones and a freeze to open them for you."

Assured thankfully that the sacrifice would be made, Thunderbird departed. At once the shamen collected the choicest sky blue turquoise and ground it into dust. The sacrifice was made and that same day lightning flashed in the sky over the piñon forests and a heavy freeze came that night. The next day the strongest people hurried to gather the nuts. They found the cones shrunken and the nut inside only a third as large as it had been before. But the meat was sweet and tender.

The pueblo Indians made it through the snowy winter and the next year heavy rains put an end to the extended drouth. And since that time the piñon nut has been small, yet always edible, and Indians have risked their lives to harvest it.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS, OCTOBER 23, 1962, SECTION 4369, TITLE 39, UNITED STATES CODE SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION OF TRUE WEST, published bi-monthly in Austin, Texas. Location of *Publication and General Business Offices:* 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Travis County, Texas 78704. Publisher, Joe Austell Small, 2405 Briargrove, Austin, Texas 78704. Editor: Pat Wagner, 706 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas 78701. Managing Editor: None. Owner: Western Publications, Inc., 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Texas: Joe Austell Small, sole shareholder. Average number of copies printed during last twelve months: 277,366; total copies printed last single issue: 274,000. Average number of sales during last twelve months through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 146,331; sales for last single issue through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 140,923. Average paid circulation during last twelve months, mail subscriptions: 25,465; paid circulation, mail subscriptions last single issue: 22,752. Average total paid circulation during last twelve months: 171,796; total paid circulation last single issue: 163,675. Average free distribution during last twelve months: 1,000; free distribution last single issue: 1,000. Average total distribution during last twelve months: 172,796; total distribution last single issue: 164,675. Average number during last twelve months unaccounted, office use, left over, spoiled after printing: 104,570; total number last single issue unaccounted, office use, left over, spoiled after printing: 109,325. (Signed) Pat Wagner, September 12, 1969.

"Him name Big Chief."

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Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 1)

Cloud-Partin-Gully-Ogle

I'm seeking information on ancestors of my great-grandparents. William Cloud (1822-1904) and Emaline Partin (1828-1915) were married October 8, 1846, probably in Missouri. In 1847, when their first child was born, they lived near Springfield, Greene County, and may have remained there until 1857 when they came West to settle in Butte County, California. A few years later they moved to Modoc County, just south of the Oregon line. Their eighth child, John Calvin Cloud, born August 18, 1862, and Maggie Elizabeth Gully, born February 24, 1874, were married August 12, 1894, at Sunset, Whitman County, Washington, and are my maternal grandparents.

Jasper P. Gully (1845-1899) and Ellen Ogle (1849-1914?) were married October 27, 1866, probably in Missouri, and went West soon to settle at Lakeport, Lake County, California. In 1881, they moved to Pine City, Whitman County, Washington. Jasper had a brother Sam and their father's name was William T. Gully. Ellen Ogle Gully had a sister Teresa (Tress) who married Sam Gully, and a sister Amando who married a Snyder. She also had a half-sister Fannie, whose married name I don't know, but who may have lived around Hanford, California, at the turn of the century. Ellen Ogle Gully had a niece Sarah Hedges and nephew Albert M. Fees of Sunset, Whitman County, in early 1890s.

In Cloud family album are two portraits, a man and woman probably in their sixties, labeled on back "Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Masters, Dec. 25, 1902." No indication of address. Remarkable facial resemblance of Mrs. Masters and my mother indicate some relationship. Anyone have clues?—Mrs. Milton Hammersly, Route 1, Box 12, Tiller, Oregon 97484

McCewen or McCune

I am looking for information on the descendants of James McCune and his wife, Elizabeth, married in the early 1700s. James McCune was born near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After his death, his widow, Elizabeth, visited her children in eastern Ohio, then returned to her home in Pennsylvania where she "Fighting or Free Quakers," because they fought for our country in the Revolution. They were expelled from the Quaker Church for this offense and formed another organization called the "Fighting Quaker Church."

There were ten children born to Elizabeth and James McCune. The oldest child and son, Thomas McCune, was born either July 12, 1756 or 1757. He was a colonel in the Revolutionary Army and married Mary Brady, the daughter of General Joseph Brady, on April 5, 1785. The rest of the children were Elizabeth, Joseph, William, Mary, Sarah, James, Abigail, Samuel and Margaret.

Colonel Thomas McCune could trace his ancestry back to the time of persecution in Scotland. The family name was then spelled McCewen. One of the McCewens wrote a book on religious liberty. After its publication, some of the family were burned at the stake, others flew to the north of Ireland, changing their name from McCewen to McCune. The McCunes came to the colonies early in its history.—Earlene Bale, 1734 4th Street, Bremerton, Washington 98310

Elmer S. Hunt

I want information concerning the Hunts in Kansas. These would be related to Elmer S. Hunt who migrated from the Dakotas prior to 1900 and took out a homestead at Gillette Grove, Clay County, Iowa. Some of his brothers, sisters or relatives are said to have gone to Kansas from the Dakota wheatlands and possibly taken up residence around Sunflower. Elmer S. Hunt died about 1933 at Fredericksburg, Iowa after migrating from Gillette Grove. He was married to Mattie Smith and they had four children, Bessie Evens Hunt, now living in La Crosse, Wisconsin; my father, Elmer Lee Hunt, deceased in 1961; Helen Plummer Hunt, now living in Gardena, California; and Orson Hunt, living on the family farm at Fredericksburg, Iowa. I would like information about my relatives, the Hunts of Kansas.—Robert L. Hunt, 138½ North Cortez, Prescott, Arizona 86301

Nolan-Fleming-Getsandanner

I would love to hear from any oldtimers who remember Johnnie Nolan, a rancher at Champion, Nebraska. In his younger days he operated a gambling den and saloon at Cripple Creek, Colorado. Johnnie is buried in a family tomb at Denver and had a son Jack who helped him with his operation and ranch spread. His side hobbies were boxing matches he operated in the early 1900s. He had three children, one of whom died at an early age. His daughter moved to California the last I heard and I wonder if she is still living. Johnnie's gambling pals called him Honest John. He is mentioned in an old book on bonanza towns which I am unable to find. He also had a saloon at Manitou Springs which is now an antique store.

Frank Fleming worked in the Wild West department of a circus in the old days and played Kit Carson, Jr. He looked the part of the showman he played as he had a flowing mane like Buffalo Bill and wore fancy beaded vests which he made himself. He had a fancy trick horse he owned in partnership with Mattie Silks, the famous Denver madam. She had a horse ranch in Colorado where she kept fancy horses.

Lois Getsandanner of Champion, Nebraska had jumping horses she showed at Pendleton, Oregon and a blind jumping horse that jumped in Madison Square Garden in the 1900s. Does anyone remember her?—Vinta Kimberling Phillips, Champion Nebraska 69023

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William Thomas

I would like any information on my grandfather, William Thomas, born in Ohio March 4, 1812 or 1817, died in Vedersburg, Indiana on September 1, 1878. First married May 11, 1845 to Elizabeth Sputsman. Second marriage in 1867, wife's name unknown; third marriage to Mary Jane Hobsen in Montgomery, Indiana. Known children by first wife: Algena, born 1850; Millasa (or Melissa), born 1852 and married to Joseph Goff; Milleanda, born 1854 and married Garrett Jolly; Miranda, born 1856; Mahala, born 1858.

He evidently divorced third wife as she and three young daughters went to Salt Lake City, Utah. This information is not too accurate and I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has any information and from his first and second wives' descendants.—Mrs. E. H. McClellan, Route 5, Box 1400, Phoenix, Arizona 85009

Family Historian

I am writing my family history and would like information on the following couples: Harry and Patty (Pangburn) Olcott, Harry and Sally (Gray) Olcott, Lewis and Charlotte Peer, Albert and Mary (Spencer) Godrey, Benjamin and Rebecca Moriah (Carr) Colburn, Daniel and Jane Tasket (Durfy), Samuel and Mary Carr, Walter and Elizabeth (Herrick) Blount, William and Mary Caldwell, David and Barbara (Deist) Ritter, James and Mary Cairns, and John and Anna (Gale) Deist. The Ritters are from Germany and the Deists were in Holland. Most of the rest lived in Pennsylvania, Ohio, or New York. Any information is deeply appreciated.—Thomas Olcott, 8600 Monroe Road, Durand, Michigan 48429

Graham-Kelley-Sallers

I am seeking information about Martha Graham who lived in Indiana in the 1830s. I'd like to find out who her husband was and also her maiden name. They had children who were Eliza Anna, Robert, Jane and Joseph. I am seeking information on any Kelley or Sallers families in Indiana in the period from 1830 to 1855.—Mrs. Warren Helms, 509 W. McKellips Road, Mesa, Arizona 85201

Kit and Jim Bradley

I would like to know if anyone could let me know about my father's two nephews. They were Kit and Jim Bradley, both attorneys in Groesbeck, Texas. My father was George Bradley who lived for many years in Kentucky and passed away in Detroit, Michigan at the age of ninety years. Kit and Jim also had a sister, Pearl, who lived in Palestine, Texas.—Mrs. Hallie Bradley Clark, Star Route, Tehachapi, California 93561

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Truly Western

(Continued from page 59)

Strawberry Gives the Raspberries?

Dear Sirs:

I am including herewith a copy of a letter received a few days ago from my son, W. K. Peterson, a painter of mountain and desert scenes and seascapes. I think that it will bring chuckles and memories of those years when the old-timers were young. To present the picture properly I'll trace in a bit of background.

W.K. is not entirely new to saddle horses. In his teens (before the Korean War) he handled pack strings for me. During the years since then most of his riding has been in an office chair. This past summer, because of his health and to get outdoors again, he left southern California's smog and went up to Idaho to his uncle's ranch to work part-time. The summer graze he mentions in the letter is some forty-odd miles back in the hills from the home ranch in Hamer. Here is the letter—unedited, unabridged and ungrammatical.

"October 16, 19—. Hi, Got your letter yesterday when I was in at the ranch. Thanks for the shirt. It looks like a good warm one and in this country I can use a lot of them.

"I have been up at Antelope Flats for about a week with the beef. Hunting season opened here last Saturday and Phil wanted me to come up here to see that the gates are closed and the fence stays in one piece. Last year and the year before last, hunters left the gates open and it took a month to locate all the stock. The hunters have been real good this year. I have talked to several of them and no trouble with them at all. However, last Sunday night it started to snow and the stock got to pushing the fence and broke a gate and I spent all day Monday rounding up about sixty head. Tuesday I spotted nine head outside the fence and after getting them back in I found a section of fence about fifty feet long down and a regular path through it. The nine head are all that have gotten out that way since I came up here but after talking to some hunters I think we have about thirty head west of here, headed out. I rode for about eight hours today trying to locate them but picked up no new tracks since the snow.

"Now let me tell you a story out of the Old West. The first night up here I ran two horses into the holding corral for my use. A friend of mine from the Forestry in S. B. (California) arrived up here on his vacation the day before I was to come up to the summer graze. I asked him if he wanted to come up with me and he said 'sure' so I have company. Well, anyway, I got two of the horses in, the night we got up here, and the next morning I wanted to get the lay of the land so out we went to saddle the horses. After a few rounds of the corral I got horse number one in tow and saddled with no trouble. Now horse number two, a mare, was having a swell time running and bucking while I was working on number one. When I went after number two she came over to me nice as you please and I got the rig on her.

"I should have noticed that she kept rolling the bit with her mouth and that she humped her back a bit when I put on the blanket and saddle. Ron said that he wasn't much as a rider and he thought the gelding (horse number one) would probably be best for him. I said okay and climbed on number two to check the length of the rig. While I was doing this she started making tight turns to the left. I got off and adjusted the stirrups and we were ready to go. Ron climbed up, and after I got the gate open he rode out onto the flat as nice as you please. Then I climbed up and the old girl started making turns to the left again. Now that is fine but you don't get any place making tight turns to the left so I gave her a little 'right rudder' and a kick in the ribs. As Ol' Strawberry and I left the corral we took to the air. About the third time we came down I got a handful of horn (by the way, this was the only contact I had with the horse at the time). On landing number four she decided to run. I thought, 'Okay, old girl, run if you want to; hell, we've got two miles of meadow and I'll see that you run until you are tired.' (Like hell you will! You damn fool, you're headed for the timber!) Now we have another problem, shall we stay together and see which tree knocks my head off or should we part company? Well, I thought, it would be better for us to part company and about then she ran into a little old stump about two feet high. I thought she would go down so I kicked loose and made a 'flying dismount with a double pirouette' and came up standing in front of her. We looked at each other for a few moments and then together we walked back to the corral.

"As we passed Ron he said, 'Boy, that was just like the Old West, but could you run through it once more as I missed the first part.' I told him that we put on only one show a day and would he go find the rest of the horses and bring them in. While I was getting the rig off the mare I gave her a talk about how good horses should act and what a bridle was for.

"Ron got back with the rest of the horses and this time I picked one that was old and tired. It just isn't the same though and each time we go out to check fence Ol' Strawberry comes running and bucking just to sort of say hello for old time's sake.

"When I went down to Hamer yesterday for supplies I got to talking with Phil about the little mare. He said, 'Oh, the chestnut? Yeah, a fine horse. We intend to break her this winter.' It seems that she had never had a bridle or saddle on in her life, let alone a rider. I told him she now had had all three—and what had happened. I thought he would bust a gut laughing! Before I came up here he had told me about every other horse at the Flats—but not a word about the mare. Do you think—?

"I wish I had made this move years ago. I sure love it up here and boy, does it feel good to work again. There is so much to do and so much to learn that I will be busy for the next hundred years.

"The painting is going real good—only one trouble, I am getting ready for Death Valley (Annual Show) and it sure is hard to paint deserts when you live in country like this. Every place I turn there is a new idea. Oh well!—I guess that's about all I can think of at this time. More later. Love, Bill."—C. O. Peterson, P. O. Box 603, Naco, Arizona 85620

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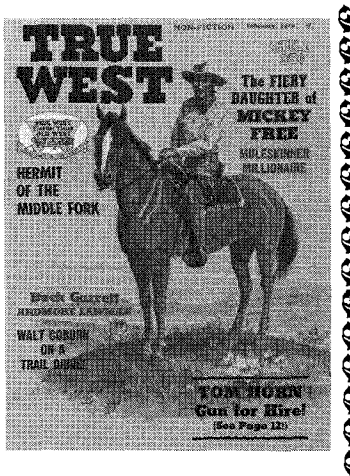

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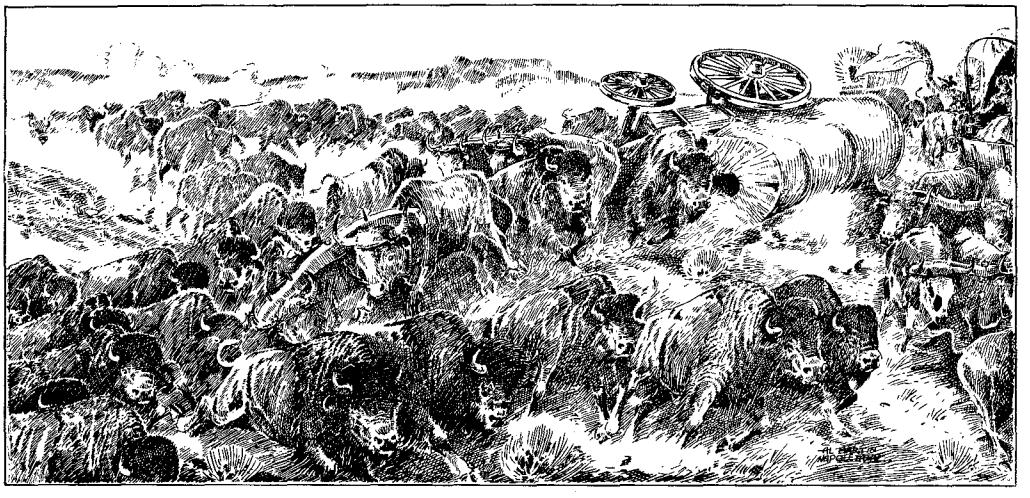

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